Wiesbaden to Moscow

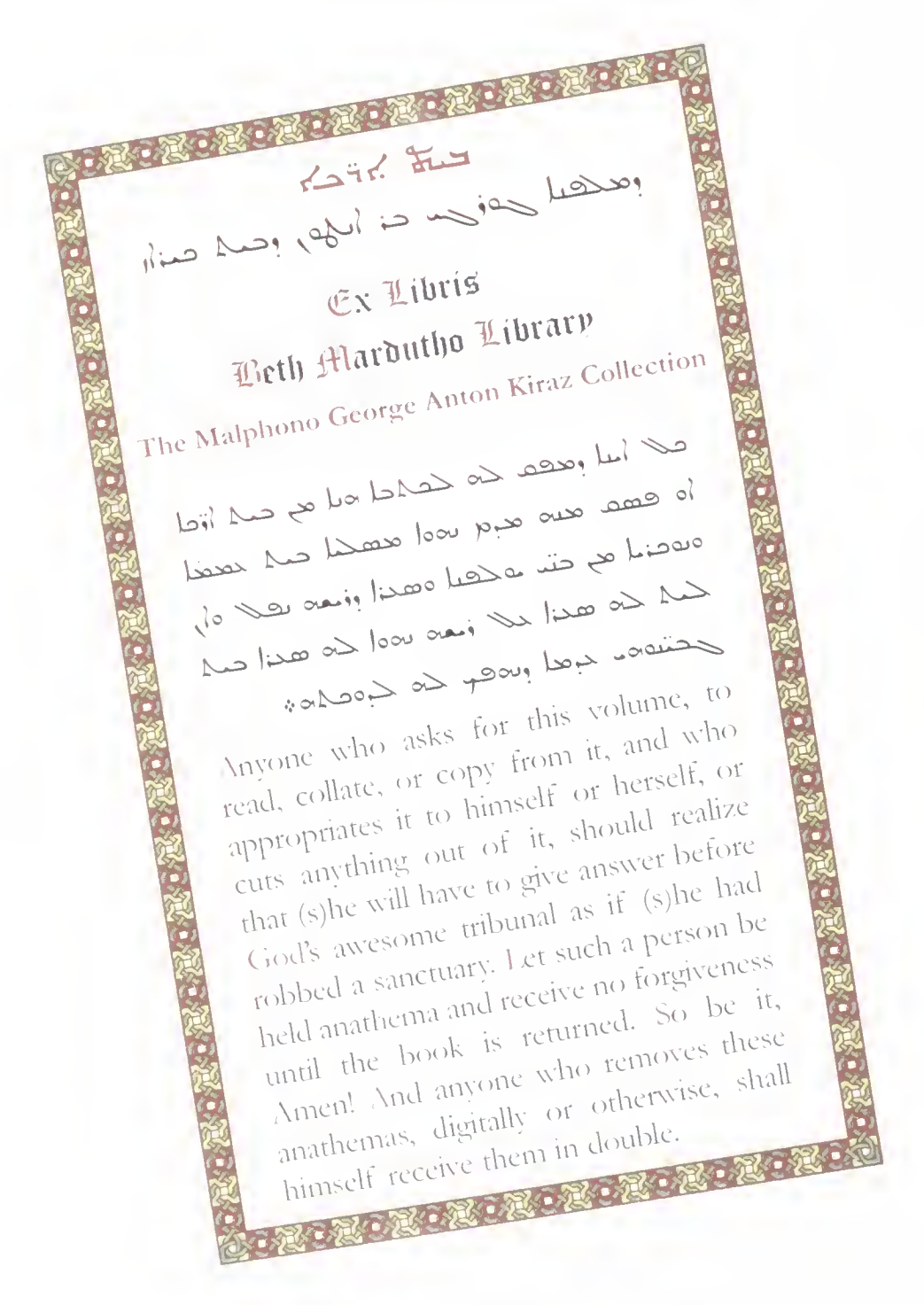
A Travelogue

MAR APREM

Mart Mariam Assyrian Church in Moscow, Russia

The Assyrian Church of St.Mary in Detroit, Michigan

Wiesbaden to Moscow



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Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

Wiesbaden to Moscow
A Travelogue of two trips in 2006

Most. Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan
B.D, M.Th, S.T.M., D. Th., Ph.D.

Thrissur
Kerala, India
2008

Wiesbaden to Moscow

A Travelogue,
English

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Copyright : Author
Date of Publication : 13 June 2008
Number of copies : 500
Number of pages : 108
Printed at : Mar Narsai Press
High Road, Thrissur - 1
Published by : Bishop Dr. Paulose Mar Paulose Foundation
Thrissur 680 008
Cover Design : Johnson John T.
Price : Rs. 70
: $5 (Abroad)

ISBN 81 - 902-205-4-3

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Detailed Outline

Chapter 1

Wiesbaden & Ventimiglia (July 2006)

July 10, 2006 by air from Cochin to Mumbai. On 14th at Frankfurt. At airport received by Archdeacon Pithyou, Yohannan. Sibo, Joumana. Ramada Hotel. Deacon Issam Warda. Deacon's wife had cooked good fish for me, as they knew that I had given up all meats when I became a bishop.

David Yacob and his wife Jenny Murad had me prepared a good dinner for like my previous visit. Qurbana on July 16th in a Roman Catholic Church. Fr.Burnwa of the old Calendar Group attended.Frankfurt to Munich. Huber family. Saritha, Thomas Aprem.

Visit to World Cup Soccer Arena. Monsignor Lothar Waldmuller. Marlene Muller who adopted Christopher and Jenny in Bonn. Nurnburg. Flight to Nice, France. Car to Ventimiglia to visit Arisi family. Baptism of Julius, the third child. Drive from San Remo to Nice. Flight to Frankfurt and on to Newark, New Jersey.

Chapter 2

New Jersey & New York (July 2006)

One of my two baggage did not arrive in USA. Long delay to get a piece of paper to write a complaint against the delay of the baggage. Wedding of Miline Ann Geevarghese. Fabulous wedding at the Greek Orthodox Church in Merrick.

Mar Thoma priest and Assyrian priest. Wedding reception dinner after the ceremony on 21st July. Holy Qurbana in the Assyrian church in New Britain, Connecticut, on July 22. Corepiscopa George Haroon. Fr.Gabriel Brakia, former vicar. Stay with Simon Thermadom, Jolly and her daughter Susan who graduated from High School. Syro Malabar Qurbana. Dr. Joy Kunjappu & Mercy Cheeramban. Prayer meeting in the house of Kunjumon (Koshy Palackamannil)..

Chapter 3

California (July - August 2006)

On Monday 31st July by 5.30 a.m. Geevarghese Emmatty drove me to the airport and I flew to Los Angeles. Although it was a long flight of 5 hours when Qasha Gewargis Bet Rasho asked me whether I could go to the cemetery without taking any rest, I said yes. It was a third day service for the father of Mr. Fiodore, a member of the Assyrian Church. He donated $2000 (about 90 thousand rupees) to our church in India. An unexpected gift.

Qasha Bet Rasho interviewed me for PARS TV On August 2nd. Orange County, Qurbana in the church of Qasha Gabriel Brakhia. My brother Addison drove me from Orange county to his residence in Oceanside.

On 4th August I celebrated Holy Qurbana in the parish in San Diego at Al Cajon. Parish Priest Shuba and Qasha Brakhia assisted. Rented church building. Dinner in the house of Yakob. On Saturday I visited the house of my niece Miriam and Tony. Dane whom I had baptized on a previous visit was

happy to see me. Miriam's younger sister Dr. Miki Mooken and her husband Jay were there. Their mother Lalu was also there. I returned Saturday night with my brother Addison to Oceanside who took me to the church in Tarzana on Sunday morning. We reached the church much earlier than expected. I attended the Morning Prayer and celebrated Holy Qurbana assisted by Fr.Bet Rasho and many deacons. There was a sumptuous breakfast afterwards. Pictures were taken and posted at the website of Assyrian enterprise. Stay in the house of Deacon Walter Rouel and Lydia. The sad demise of Fr. Gabriel Brakia.

Chapter 4

Detroit, Michigan (August 2006)

Flew from Los Angeles to Detroit. Met Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. Supper in the house of Qasha Benjamin Benjamin, parish priest. Sabah Yohannan and committee members were present. Aprim Murad, uncle of Jenny Yacoub of Wiesbadan was there. Breakfast with His Holiness in the house of deacon Lawrence Namato.

Since the church is dedicated to the name of Mart Mariam, the congregation wished it to be consecrated on Mart Mariam Memorial Day on 15 August, 2006 or two days earlier on August 13 to coincide it with a Sunday. A large bronze bell of 80 kilos to be transported to Detroit from Trichur.

On Wednesday Fr. Benjamin and Mr. Sabah took me to the Canadian Consulate for visa to visit Canada.

Chapter 5

CANADA (August 2006)

Sabah Yohannan drove me to Toronto to stay in the house of Paul Johnson of Trichur living in Vaughan near Toronto. Before I started taking a siesta Saba called me to say that Bishop Emmanuel of Toronto was waiting for me. So I moved there. Usha's brother Francis Palissery drove me to Bishop Emmanuel's residence. Bishop earned his M.Div. and M.A.degrees and is trying for a doctorate; He has a lot of books in his library.

On Saturday morning Mr. Binoy Jacob came to take me to his house. Bishop recognized him, because he had come with his father Jacob to invite him to the opening of the Orthodox Church in Toronto some 8 years ago. It was a pleasant visit in the house of Binoy, as his wife Dr. Nishy Ph.D. On the same evening I moved to the house of Sunny Nellangara. My second cousin Darmo Mooken and his wife came to see me in that house. His brother Chinnan Mooken was in Norway where his son a medical doctor trained in Hungary was working. Sunny and Shantha took me to the new Church near the airport.

Mart Mariam Church in Toronto is the cathedral of the Bishop Mar Emmanuel of Canada. There were about a thousand people present for the Holy Qurbana. As the work of the flooring of the altar was not completed the celebration of Holy Qurbana was near the altar. Bishop Emmanuel and archdeacon Khoshaba along with seven deacons assisted. Breakfast after Qurbana was in the hall next door. Several

photos were taken. Mother of Sister Olga Noel of Baghdad, who has become a Roman Catholic nun, greeted me.

After Qurbana I visited Joly Palissery & Seena, Inasu & Ayesha Nadakavukaren, Dr Sanjai and Dr.Sunil. Visited China Exhibition. Ayesha is reading a lot of spiritual books. She is leading prayer groups. Some housewives have time. Their children are grown up and are on their own. Our lay people, if they have time should take interest in spiritual affairs,

Stayed with Wilson & Sicily Padavan in London. His son Dean is practicing medicine in New York, Daughter Donna, doing Ph.D, came with Wilson to drop me in Windsor. Assyrian supper in Windsor. Saba drove me from Windsor to Detroit again. Qurbana planned for Flint on Saturday was cancelled due to a funeral in that parish. On 20 August Qurbana in Mart Mariam Church. The new church was not completed. Deacon Lawrence Namato and other deacons. Chorepiscopa George Toma of Chicago also assisted in the Qurbana.

On 22nd August 2006 I said good bye to Fr.Benjamin. Saba drove me to the airport to fly to Madras via Frankfurt. The United Airlines of America has a tie- up with Lufthansa of Germany.

Detroit church was completed by April 2007. The date for blessing by the Catholicos Patriarch was fixed for May 6th. The new church was vandalized on April 1st with graffiti against Arabs.

In Madras, India I saw Frankly (wife of my nephew in England Varghese George) and their two children, namely Joel and

Amelia. Children were happy to see their Dad's uncle who had baptized them as well as their Dad.

Chapter 6

Fourth Visit to UAE (October 2006)

On 5th October 2006 I reached Dubai airport. Merhaba (Welcome) service. Visa expired. Hotel Visa. Fr. E.V. Antony arrived the same day. Qurbana on Friday at the CSI chapel near the Malayalam CSI service. Assyrians such as Zaia George, Rony Awiqam and others attended. Indians such as Timothy Mooken, Chacko Konikara, E.K.Johnson, Blesson Antony, Renjith Chemban, John Lazar, Julie Ashok, Sajimon Nellissery and others attended. On Saturday I left Dubai for Vienna; Burj Dubai. Smart City in Cochin.

Chapter 7

Vienna, AUSTRIA (October 2006)

Ludwig Niestelberger. Fr. Tabor. Shamasha Yacoub. Nasser Elia. Qurbana on Sunday Oct 15. Pro Oriente meeting. Archbishop Powathil, Fr. Geevarghese Chediath, Fr. Baby Varghese, Mor Theophilus are other Indian delegates. Press Release. Palloti House. Visa for Russia from the Russian Consulate in Vienna. Qurbana in St. Stephan Cathedral by Maronite Archbishop Bolos Matar of Beirut. Oct. 20 going to Amsterdam and connecting to Moscow.

Chapter 8

Moscow (October 2006)

VIP welcome at Moscow airport. Fr. Samano and Mr. Slava Illusion and others received me at the airport-Friday October 20. Stay at the Danieliski Monastery, five star hotel belonging to the Moscow Patriarchate. Funeral of Sonia on Saturday. Qurbana on Sunday 22. Dr. Nikolai Yohanna interpreting sermon from English to Russian. On Wednesday Qurbana in the Memorial day of Rabban Pithyon. Eastern Calendar in Russia.

Speech in the Russian State University. Dr. Alexander Agadujulan interpreted. Prof. Nikolai Shaburov, Head of the Department welcomed me, Fr. Samano and others had a cup of tea in his office. Dinner in the house of sub deacon David. Visited, Dr. Jouno.

Happy to visit Nadya Davidova and her son George. They were my guests in Trichur several years ago. On October 27 State Library in Kremlin. Read some books. Mr. Badalov and Deputy Head of the library. On Friday evening in the airport. But Emirates flight is from different airport. Aeroflot ticket to Dubai to catch my connection to India. Difficulties about carrying dollars. Reached Kochi airport safe on 28th October, 2006.

Foreword

DR. P. V. KRISHNAN NAIR,
Former Secretary, Sahithya Akademi,
Thrissur

Bishop Mar Aprem is well known for his unalloyed and noble personality. More than an individual he is a synonym for spirituality, love, and purity that have transcended the times. His services and contribution in the devotional, cultural and social spheres as well as his healing touch for the helpless and the afflicted have become rare paradigms worthy of emulation. To crown all this he has evinced a keen and passionate interest in and concern for the world of letters. What I visualize right in front of me now is his 66th work. His creative genius has straddled disparate worlds like poetry, song writing, philosophy, travelogue, ecumenism and satirical creations "Wiesbaden to Moscow" is a captivating description of an interesting journey. The book aims at achieving self-realisation through the circulation of *Weltanschauung.*

Francis Bacon and other thinkers like him have stressed the important role that travel plays

in a man's life. Our memory is replete with prominent and steadfast itinerants like Ptolemy, Pliny, Megasthines, Ithsing, Marco Polo, Alburunni, Abdul Razak, Columbus, Magellan, Mungopark, Livingston, Scott, and Hillary etc. Not all travellers and explorers write books almost their journeys and explorations. The saying that writing a good travelogue is more cumbersome than undertaking a good journey is well known and true. The term "Avadhoodhan" proves that this is true. It is possible that the Indian phsych believed that wandering from place to place expiates since while sitting at home enhances the effect of sin. Sri. Budha, Sankaracharya, Chaitanya and Vivekananda were all indomitable itinerants. We can enlarge the list with the inclusion of names like Gandhiji, Nehru, Vinobha Bhave.

"Travelling is the most enjoyable thing in life and reading books on travel is the next best," says Jawaharlal Nehru. *'Varthamanapusthakam'* which is considered as the first book on travel literature in Malayalam was penned by a priest Paremmakkil Thoma Kathanar. There is another work of the same genre vying for the title of being the first in Malayalam "*Oorslem Yathraviveranam*". It was

also authored by a priest, Metropolitan & Geevarghese Mar Gregorious. Bishop Mar Aprem has undertaken up teen journeys, most of which have been immortalized in black and white. Indian sages like Swami Ranganathanandaji and Swami Chinmayanantha were notable globetrotters in observation.

The present author is past master in observation. Wherever he has roamed he has done so with unshut eyes and an open mind. That is exactly why the reader can enjoy the pure comfort of universal love while reading this book. The author describes his experiences and observations in eight chapters that make up the work. He takes his readers through variegated landscapes like Germany, New Jersey, New York, California, Michigan, Canada, U.A.E., Austria and Moscow by means of his potent penmanship. All the while he retains his sacerdotal vision and spiritualistic concern. Precisely because of this Mar Aprem's book has the distinction of being replete with Church information. Along with this, one also gets information on the geographical and political idiosyncrasies of each country with precise details. The reader has the feeling that he has been taken

on a grand tour giving his first hand experiences of the places described, the geniality and humanity of the author are embodied in the efforts he takes to meet and share love with relatives in particular and Keralites in general wherever he goes. No wonder that the book carries the imprint of secularism in its purest form. What Vyasan eulogized as "Universal Vision" is well enshrined in this book.

The author looks at the world and its purity from the higher echelons of humanity. His 54th foreign journey that began on 10th July ends in August. His 55th journey in from 5th to 28th October 2006. The short span of the visit and rather large number of countries gone through preclude expectation. If any in-depth study or analysis from this work. In this connection the name of the world-renowned traveller and the author of the 'Inside' Series, John Gunthur, wades into memory. The present work of Mar Aprem will help readers to acquaint themselves with multifarious institutions and manifold individuals. An endearing trait of the author is his ability to engage children in cosy chats wherever he has gone. As a result every line of the book resonates with his child-like innocence and affection.

The book under consideration is a veritable *tour de force* of generosity, nobility and sense of humour that fan our aesthetic appreciation to flame. The author has attempted to turn the search light on the literary and cultural aspects of the countries he has visited. Special mention may be made of Mar Aprem's sense of humour. Scholars like Thomas Hobbes, Freud, Bergson, Spenser, William Haslett, Walter Paiter, etc have conceptualized on laughter and humour. The major part of Mar Aprem's writings belongs to the witty or facetious mode. They satirize the times and society in a hilarian manner without wounding. One can find the same pollens and the same fragrance in this book also.

The author knows pretty well that the purpose of language is to proclaim one's humanity. The definition of man as language animal is quite meaningful and significant. This paramount truth about man has been made explicit in the Bible. The Tower of Babel is a revealing story. Here the writer has eschewed the involved expression and made a beeline for the limpid language, thus elucidating the saying that 'Style is man'. The essence of Mar Aprem's gravity lies in the simplicity of his life.

The Indian Sages are not tied to any place but are in perpetual momentum. Here the author has appropriated the ideal for his own – 'Charavedi'. In him we find all the ingredients essential for a world traveller i.e. an imaginative mind, minute observational skill, historical scholarship, energetic language and dexterity in their proper proportions. 'Wiesbaden to Moscow' is unique in the sense that it is a harmonious mix of knowledge and entertainment. I consider it as a Godsend privilege to have got the opportunity to scribble the foreword for such a good work. I earnestly wish that many more works will flow from his pen. Borrowing a phrase from Melpathoor, the author of 'Narayaneeyam' I pray for his long life and health.

Thrissur
13 June 2008

P.V.Krishnan Nair

INTRODUCTION

This is my 66th book. It was my desire to publish the book soon after my trip in July–August 2006. I completed my 66 years of age on 13 June 2006. Now my desire is to have it published on or before 13th June 2007. Therefore I decided to include my 55th trip which was in October 2006. I am anxious to write travelogues before the data become outdated. At the same time it is impossible to write like a daily reporter. Had I kept a daily diary it could be possible to print travelogue soon after the travel.

When I was about to give a final shape for my two trips in the travelogue the draft got deleted by mistake in my computer. So I was disappointed. On April Fools day, I decided to write again to attain my target of publishing it on my 67th birth anniversary. If I complete one or two books under preparation for a long time, then I can count the number of books I wrote long with the number of years which God granted to me on this planet earth

I have desired to give enough information about our Church through my previous travelogues. I have followed the same pattern in this book also. In addition to Church history I have attempted to give some general information on the geography, politics, social status etc. of the countries I visited. A lot of places are covered in this small book. Frankfurt (Germany), Nice(France), Ventimiglia (Italy), San Remo, Munich, New York, Newark, New Britain, Los Angeles, San Diego, Detroit

(USA), Toronto (Canada),where the places visitng in my first trip of July-August 2006. Dubai, Sharjah (UAE), Vienna (Austria), Amsterdam (Holland) and Moscow (Russia) are described in the second trip of October 2006.

My travelogues have secular informations. As an Indian hailing from Kerala I have been adding information about people from my state of Kerala, whether Christian, Muslim or Hindu. In my previous travelogue I mentioned about Mr. Yusuffali M.A. and the Lulu Stores found in the UAE. In spite of his hectic schedule shuttling between the Gulf and Kerala he was kind enough to read my travelogue and send to me the following letter of encouragement.

H.G. Dr. Mar Aprem, July 3, 2006
Metropolitan,
Church of the East
Metropolitan Palace,
Trichur- 680001
Kerala

Your Gracious,

I take this opportunity to immensely thank you for being so thoughtful in sending me a copy of the travelogue **UAE via U.K. & USA**. I also thank Your Gracious for visiting our Shopping Centre in Karama during the stay in the UAE and for vividly sketching our business operations in the travelogue.

The travelogue which is lucid in language is thoroughly enjoyable and I strongly believe that it will provide all its readers in-depth knowledge about UAE, U.K. & USA.
I sincerely pray to Almighty God to bless Your Gracious with good health and long life.

Thanking you,
I remain
Yours sincerely

Yusuffali M.A,

I want to record my appreciation to him. His business concern called EMKE Group has business in the following places as mentioned in his letterhead. UAE + Oman + Qatar + Kuwait + Yemen + Indonesia + Thailand + Hong Kong + China +.Tanzania +Benin.

Europe eyeing high- spending Indian Travellers

(P.9, The New Indian Express, Kochi, February 3, 2007)

New Delhi, Feb 2: Though China is billed to be the biggest outbound tourist market in the times to come, it is the Indian traveller the Europe should be setting eyes on as they are bigger spenders than their Chinese counterparts, says a report.

On an average an Indian spends 5,100 dollars, in contrast to Chinese spending about 2,600, says Global Trends Reports 2006 of World Travel Market. The report draws on Euro monitor International's Global travel and tourism market research conducted in 205 countries.

While Chinese are restricted in the purpose and scope of travel, the report says European tourism industry cannot afford to ignore Indians who have more reasons to travel to Europe such as visiting relatives, alpine spots where Bollywood movies are shot, cricket and so on.

Noting that within Europe, the UK is the top destination for Indian tourists as it is home to a large Indian community, the report said, "Unlike the Chinese, Indian tourists coming to the UK like to spend more on accommodation."

"In addition, they also tend to travel in large groups with their families and to engage in cultural activities, such as musicals and plays," it said.

"Many also buy tickets to watch cricket matches as a part of their trip which offers a good opportunity to encourage a stopover in Europe for cricket fans on the way to or from the ICC Cricket Cup 2007 in the West Indies," the report said and added Indian tourists stay on average four days in the UK, spending 1,900 dollars on sightseeing and shopping alone."

In a play called RICHELIEW written by Bulwer – Lyton, Cardinal Richeliew heard about a plot against him contrived by the monk Joseph, who was friend of the Cardinal. Being religious people Cardinal did not want to challenge monk Joseph for a physical combat. He wrote; "Beneath the rule of not entirely great; the pen is mightier than the sword".

I keep writing travelogues and other books, because I believe the pen is mightier than a sword.

The prestigious Booker Prize of 2006 went to a young lady Kiran Desai for her book THE INHERITANCE OF LOSS. It is a story of an orphan girl named Sai, aged 13, plucked from a convent and sent to Kalimpong to live with her

grandfather. We Indians are happy that a young Indian writer got the Booker Prize. For some years many of us were speculating that her mother Anita Desai, who was nominated for the Booker Prize earlier, would get it. She did not get. Kiran says that she needs to discuss this book with her mother and she says "It is as much hers and it was mine".

I am grateful to all who helped me to reduce the number of mistakes in this publication. I am still hoping that I will be able to see at least one of my books printed without many mistakes. I promise to do my best this time. I am grateful to Mar Narsai Press belonging to our Church in India, founded by Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan in 1926 with some help from Deacon (later Qasha) Joseph Kelaita during his sojourn in India .The present Manager Fr. Michael Vallavanthara M.A. has tried his best to print at least one of my books without printer's devil during his or mine life time.

My gratitude goes to Joseph Haweil, an Assyrian living in Melbourne, Australia who was kind enough to read through the manuscript of this book and suggest corrections. He has been an admirer of my life and work for some times by e-mails and telephone.

My gratitude is also to Prof. P.V. Krishnan Nair who wrote a fitting FOREWORD to this book.

In the past many eminent men from many walks of life wrote Foreword to my books. Those kind words encouraged me never to stop writing. In my busy schedule I never could do justice to the art of writing with literary skills. Now I am getting

older and therefore may give up the idea to improve the quality of my writing by studies.

I had published first two parts of my auto biography, from my birth unto 40 years of age and the second one from 40 to 50. When I completed 60 and 65 I thought of attempting the third part. May be I will do it within a few months.

Metropolitan's Palace,
Trichur 680001
13 June 2007

Mar Aprem

Postscript

While the publication of this book was delayed the President of India in 2008 honoured Mr. Yusaffali M.A. with prestigious award of Padma Shri. All the people who knew him rejoiced at this news, because he deserved such recognition. Thousands of people in Trichur are grateful to this man for the jobs he provided to the people in need irrespective of caste or creed. That is the reason why the leaders of different religions congratulated him at various occasions.

Chapter 1

Wiesbaden & Ventimiglia (July 2006)

On Monday 10th July 2006 I flew from Cochin to Mumbai. A priest from the Bishop's House of Kalyan diocese received me at Mumbai airport. This diocese is the outside Kerala diocese of the Syro Malabar Catholic Church. Members of this Church living near Mumbai city were worshippers in the Latin Churches under the Archbishop of Mumbai. But now the Syro-Malabar members got the newly created diocese of Kalyan. The Bishop of Kalyan is not under the Archbishop of Mumbai but under the Major Archbishop of Ernakulam (Now Cardinal Varky Vithayathil).

I stayed in Santhwana: The Holistic Health Care and Research Center in Kolka Village, Mumbai-Pune Highway, Panvel, Raigad District, Maharastra, 410 206. I later stayed there from 25th February to March 10, 2007 for the treatment of Obesity and Vertigo. The giddiness due to vertigo is affecting me for the first time. I am advised to take better care of my ears. Santhwana Holistic Health Care Institute was started by the Bishop of Kalyan of the Syro Malabar Church. The Minor Seminary of their Diocese is also situated in this campus, which is far from the busy Bombay city.

Bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal of Kalyan Diocese should be congratulated for starting this Santhwana, Holistic Health Care Center with treatment of Homeopathy, Magnet therapy and such alternate medical systems. Dr. Joel George, Dr. Minimol Cherian and Dr. A.V. Sheela deserve great appreciation for the advice and treatment of my increased diabetes and vertigo trouble (ear balance). Doctors advised to have enough rest or decrease activity to this hyper active bishop.

The starting of this hospital was owing to the encouragement of Fr. Jeeson Kanjirathingal, a young priest working in Germany since August 2006 on deputation from the Kalyan diocese. He was healed in the magnet college in Christopher Nagar, near Trichur under Fr. Dr. Anto Edakalathur. Fr. Jeeson telephoned me from Germany to wish me to get well soon.

On 13th July 2006 I flew from Mumbai airport to Frankfurt airport during the night. Wiesbaden is the suburb of Frankfurt. There are many Assyrians living in Wiesbaden- Mainz area near Frankfurt. This area is the major concentration of the Assyrian Church of the East and the Ancient Church of the East (old calendar) in Germany.

On Friday 14th July 2006 I reached the Frankfurt airport at 8a. m. Archdeacon Pithyou Pithyou, the old priest of the parish there to receive me. Yohkanna Sibo, a former teacher in Syria, who was in charge of my hospitality in Wiesbaden, was there along with Deacon Issayi. Oshana and others were also there. We went to the Ramada Hotel in Wiesbaden where I stayed.

I had some rest after a sleepless night in the flight. Then I went to the house of Yohannan Sibo and had a homely food prepared deliciously by his wife. His son Daniel aged about 6 was there. I told him that I had his name in my travelogue when I visited them three and half years ago. He has three daughters and Daniel is the fourth. The first one Joumana was married already when I visited them in 2002. The second and third, I think are in school. It was the third one I talked to over the phone when I telephoned from Trichur to announce about my arrival time in Frankfurt. Children know more English than their parents.

In the evening we went to the house of Deacon Issam Warda. Deacon's wife had cooked good fish for me, as they knew that I had given up all meats when I became a bishop. I must say that I am now glad about it because I am able to put my cholesterol level within the normal range. My cholesterol level is between 150 and 170. The normal level is 150 and 200. This is what the medical world tells to the patients today. A few years ago they used to say 150 to 250 were normal. By bringing the upper limit down to 200 instead of 250 the number of patients increased by a few millions. They started to take statin tablets. The doctors say you have to take it even when the level was the minimum like myself having only 150. I do not know whether they will allow me to stop it when it goes below the level of 150.

On Saturday Yokhanna Sibo wanted to take me to his house for breakfast. Since I was invited to two houses for lunch and dinner I told him that I shall stay at the hotel and I can take

some exercise in the morning. I did not eat breakfast in the dining room, as there was already free tea, apple, and rolls just outside the dining room in the lobby of the hotel. Later I understood that they charged 15 Euros for a breakfast. I am glad that I did not take it. I calculated 15 Euros would be 730 Rupees. I do not think that anybody in India would eat breakfast for Rs.730. I do not think that Euro 15 breakfast was a large size plate.

David Yacob and his wife Jenny Murad had served dinner for me during my previous visit. David was my interpreter. When I requested his help this year, he respectfully denied saying that it was not easy to interpret, as the words I use are more religious than secular. Why should the layman translate a sermon in the church when it is the duty of the clergy?

Jenny Murad was also happy in my visit. I had met her parents in Phoenix, Arizona in 2004. I knew her father's brother Francis in Chicago. His wife Dr. Charlotte was the younger sister of Juliet Kasha and the choir leader of the Chicago Mar Gewargis Cathedral, Juan Joseph.

I met all three sisters and their mother in 1997 in the house of Rabbi Juliet Kasha. Jennie's father's brother Aprim Murad is active in our Detroit parish. So I had met him in Detroit in 2004. I was happy to talk to Francis as well as Rabbi Juliet Kasha over the phone. Rabbi Juliet moved from Chicago to Scottsdale near Phoenix. Since her sister Charlotte lives in that area she found a house there to live. She just retired from her teaching job in Chicago. I will miss Juliet in Chicago. But her son Ramsen Kasha and his wife Jackie will be in the same

ouse to remind me of a high school teacher who loved the dian church and helped the Mar Timotheus Charitable ospital in Kunnathumkara.

n 16th July I celebrated Holy Qurbana in Wiesbaden, ermany for our Assyrian congregation. It was a Roman atholic Church. They allowed us to celebrate after their urbana and baptism. We went around 12 noon, as we were l hungry. Archdeacon Pithyon Pithyon, the vicar, assisted e along with three deacons. The priest of the old calendar roup, Fr.Barnwa was present. He said that he cancelled his urbana, as he had no deacon to assist on that day. I always elcome the idea that we will have unity of two calendar roups in the next generation, if not in the present. I was doing urbana for this congregation for the 4th time after our unity November 1995.

he same Sunday I flew from Frankfurt to Munich. I was appy to hear that Saritha, the girl adopted by the Huber mily from the Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage, just raduated in her three year course in Pedagogy etc to be a acher cum nurse to the handicapped children. She is looking r job. Her mother says that it is not easy to get a suitable b in Germany.

inancially Germany is not equal to some European nations. homas the boy adopted by the same family is a hardworking y. He goes to work in the airport at 3 a.m. I know that any people in India will not accept a job that requires them get up before 3 a.m. or even 5 a.m.

In Munich we went to see the Arena where the World Cup soccer games were held. Although I could not find time to watch a world cup game even for an hour in India, I was able to spend two hours to visit the Arena. It is now used for soccer games of two professional teams every week. I had seen the Olympic stadium of Munich during my visit in 1977. It was five years after the Munich Olympics.

I talked to Monsignor Lothar Waldmuller, Ecumenical ordinariat of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Munich. He was very busy. So, I said that we will try to meet in Kerala when he and Dr. Johannnes Madey visit Kerala in September after the visit of the present Pope to Munich.

The present Pope Benedict XVI was the archbishop of Munich in 1977 when I visited there. I remember the new Archbishop Ratzinger walking in the Corpus Christi procession in June 1977. In Trichur only one year I was allowed to walk in the Palm Sunday procession. The chance happened when the organizers could not arrange the decorated Jeep where I was supposed to be seated fully vested with mitre and Episcopal Staff. I welcome such chances occasionally to walk with the people.

I met with the mother of another girl adopted in Munich. Also I talked with the father of another boy adopted in Nurnburg. I had a call from Mrs. Merlene Muller who adopted Jenny and Christopher. She invited me to visit Bonn, which was only about an hour from Frankfurt. Unfortunately I don't have enough time. I said that I would go to Bonn to visit them in the next trip.

At Nice, France

On 19th July 2006 I flew from Munich, Germany to Nice in the border of France. Mr.Alberto Arisi from Ventimiglia, Italy received me and drove me to San Remo where I stayed for two days. On 20th July I visited the home of Arisi to baptize their third child, a boy named Julius. I guess the name of Julius Caesar is a great name for the Italians, although more than 2000 years have gone after the great Julius Caesar had been assassinated by Brutus brutally.

On Thursday I baptized Julius, third son of Arisi in Ventimiglia. I had baptized Jacomus the second son of Arisi 6 years ago. He thinks that there are several people like him interested in our Church. We should have a branch of the Church of the East, non-Assyrian, like our Seattle parish so that our Church in Europe can grow.

If we continue to worship only in Assyrian language and remain as an Assyrian parish we will have to wait for the refugees and few immigrants from Iraq, Iran, Syria and Lebanon. But our Church which was a great missionary Church preached in China, Tibet, Indonesia, Sri Lanka should not remain in the reduced state where we are now. We should revive our missionary zeal exhibited by our forefathers.

We talked about ecumenical situation of the Church of the East. On 21st July Mr. Arisi drove me from San Remo to Nice near the tiny kingdom of Monaco and I was afraid that the security people would create problem about the half a kilo extra weight in my baggage. Therefore I took half a kilo in my hand baggage and only 22.2 kilos in my checked-in baggage

to Newark, New Jersey. The flight reached Frankfurt on time and we moved to the next flight to Newark, New Jersey.

Fortunately they do not complain about the overweight of some fatty persons who weighs over 100 kgs.The aircraft can take 100 passengers weighing 60 kgs. each rather than 60 passengers having an average weight of 100 Kgs. If we have 60 passengers of 101 kgs. each, the total weight will be 6060 Kgs. Airlines are considering framing rules to charge double to all obese persons. Let us all reduce weight. It will be good for our pocket, in addition to our health.

Mr. Alberto Arisi enquired whether I would visit him in 2007. He gave me some clue about the purpose of my future visit to him. He said that his wife was young and he anticipated the baptism of his 4th child, if and when he or she is born. As a matter of fact he and his wife were blessed with the 4th child in 2007 and he began to telephone me about the possibility of my visit to them in order to baptize this child.

Unfortunately as I suffered from vertigo (ear balance problem) in February 2007 while at Bombay I did not have the courage to plan a trip to any foreign country. I knew that my foreign visit would not take place in 2007 and I suggested that he would invite the Assyrian priest who baptized his first baby. Thus the first and the forth child were baptized by Fr. Barnwa, priest of the Ancient Church of the East (Old Calendar Group). A few months ago he telephoned me to enquire the possible date of my next trip. I guess that it is just a casual enquiry and not any planning for the baptism of the fifth child.

Chapter 2

New Jersey. USA

On Friday 21 I travelled by car from Italy to Germany and flew from Nice to Frankfurt and on to Newark, New Jersey in USA. So I was in four countries on the same day. Simon Thermadom whom we call Babu was at the airport with his daughter Tina. I spent three days in his home. On 21st I attended the wedding of Miline Ann Geevarghese in a rented church in Merrick. The bridegroom Siby belonged to the Mar Thoma Church in Long Island. Our Assyrian priest Fr. Gewargis Sulaiman also participated in the service.

When I reached Newark I realized that they had loaded only one of the two bags. I complained about it. They promised that they would deliver it at the door of the house where I was living. But I was moving the next day to attend the wedding.

The wedding of Miline Ann Geevarghese was a grand function. I knew Miline had been preparing for the grand day. The bridesmaids were seven and groomsmen were seven, so with the best man and the maid of honour there were sixteen people. There were four flower girls and eight ushers (four boys and four girls). There were two children to carry the wedding rings. Since they were only 3 years and less than 2 years old these boys were pulled in a wagon by Hansram Ramrup, the elder son-in–law of Geevarghese Emmatty.

Seena Thomas was the maid of honour and Steven Cyriac was the best man. Elizabeth Ramrup the elder sister of the bride had a prominent place. Of course, the parents of the bride (Emmatty Geevarghese and Mrs. Aleyamma Geevarghese) as well as the groom's parents (Sam T.Joseph and Mrs. Marykutty Sam) were in the front row. Each one had to play some role in the wedding ceremony. They had a rehearsal the previous evening in the same church. The ushers were escorting people to the right place. The cameramen were giving instructions to stand in the proper posture suitable to his wedding photo album.

The wedding was in the Greek Orthodox Church in Merrick in Long Island. It is rented out for the wedding ceremony. I was told that many Kerala families rent it for wedding purpose. The reception was in the Huntington Town House in Huntington, Long Island. The churches near the Town House belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. They do not rent out the church for non-Catholics to conduct service.

Greek Orthodox Church is a beautiful church with enough space to hold all the guests. The Service was led by the vicar of the Mar Thoma Church Rev. K.George. He told me that it is his first marriage service in USA. I told him the story of a patient, who was nervous just before her first surgery. She told her surgeon, I am nervous, because it is my first surgery. The surgeon comforted her by saying that this is my first surgery too. How much comfort the patient got by this response? It is not recorded even in my joke book.

The Assyrian priest of the Yonkers church Fr. Gevarghese Sulaiman was with me and reading the prayers during the ceremony.

On 23rd July I celebrated Holy Qurbana in St. Thomas Church, New Britain, Connecticut. Cor-Episcopa George Haroon and former vicar Fr. Gabriel Brakhia and two deacons assisted. In addition to Babu and his family, the family of his sister Jolly was there. The following Thursday I went to the house of Jolly in Philadelphia.

Susan, daughter of Jolly is just graduated from George Washington High School. She is a retarded girl. But let us thank God that Susan can sing devotional songs, read Bible etc. In America they give a lot of opportunities to educate the mentally retarded children. I hope that Susan will get a job. Her brother Renil is a good driver. Being a young boy of 25 I had a doubt whether he will be a safe driver to take me to Philadelphia and to bring me back to New Jersey the next day.

On Saturday 29th I attended the Syro Malabar Qurbana in memorial of Raphael Kunjappu of Trichur arranged by his brother Dr. Joy Kunjappu Ph.D., D.Sc. who is teaching in the New York University as well as in Columbia University in New York. His wife Mercy Cheeramban was my student in Syriac classes some 35 years ago in Trichur. Fr. Jos, priest of Syro Malabar parish in Bronx, was happy to welcome me to his parish and invite me to speak to the people gathered there for Qurbana and memorial service.

On Sunday 30th July I celebrated Holy Qurbana in Mar Mari Assyrian church in Yonkers. Fr. Gewargis Sulaiman assisted. Many people of our Church in Trichur attended. Due to shortage of space I am not listing all their names. But I published a group photo of Trichur people in the July - August issue of the **Voice of the East** bi- monthly.

In the evening I preached in a prayer meeting in the house of Kunjumon (Koshy Palackamannil), brother of Aleyamma, wife of Geevarghese Emmatty. There was a *shamiana* in the backyard of the house temporarily erected to accommodate 100 Malayalees attending the prayer meeting and supper. The Mar Thoma priest led the prayer meeting. The Orthodox & Jacobite Priests from India also attended. I spoke there about half an hour. The whole service was in Malayalam except the vote of thanks, which Miss Hazel Koshy proposed in English. Koshy is a Malayalam name. Our young people are comfortable in English while most of the elders want to have worship in mother tongue especially when they are living far away from Kerala. We sang 5 or 6 devotional songs in Malayalam.

Chapter 3

California

On Monday 31st July by 5.30 a.m. Geevarghese Emmatty drove me to the airport and I flew to Los Angeles. It was a long flight of 5 hours. When Qasha Gewargis Bet Rasho asked me whether I could go to the cemetery without taking any rest, I said yes. It was a 3rd day service after the demise of the father of Mr. Fiodore, a member of the Assyrian Church. From the cemetery I went to the house of the bereaved family.

Fiodore is a diamond merchant having Jewellery shops. I was told that there is not much profit in gold business. My hometown Trichur, now spelt as Thrissur is the gold Jewellery capital of Kerala. There are more than 100 Jewellery shops in the town near our church. Without any request Fiodore donated $2000 (about 90 thousand rupees) to our Church in India. An unexpected gift.

On Tuesday I was interviewed by Qasha George Bet Rasho on PARS TV. They later sent me a CD of that interview. It looks better than I expected. As it was a live broadcast I had my doubts about the quality of my presentation in answering questions. I was extremely impressed by the interviewer. It was Qasha George Bet Rasho himself. Some of our Assyrian priests are not fluent in English as they use Assyrian or Aramaic for the worship and conversation with the members of the parish. But Fr.Bet Rasho impressed me

very much in asking me the right questions and understanding my answers in the right spirit.

On Wednesday 2nd August I came to Orange County. Qasha Gabriel Brakhia was driving the car. A life insurance agent started talking with him over the cell phone. He wanted all dates and details about him and his wife. The Insurance Agent offered him nice benefits if he switched to his insurance company. The priest told him to call him the next day. Yet the Insurance Agent did not end his canvassing. I am glad that priest the did not switch to his company. Because he died of heart attack within a month. If the priest had shifted to the new company he would not get any benefit. In India you have to wait six months to make you eligible to claim insurance benefits. There may be some people who take insurance just before death or suicide or faked death.

Fr. Brakia assisted me for Holy Qurbana on the evening in his church. I had conducted Holy Qurbana in that parish once or twice. Qasha Kando Kando of Modesto was the priest at that time. I met a lot of people after Qurbana.

On Thursday my younger brother Addison drove me from Orange County to Oceanside.

On Friday 4th August I celebrated Holy Qurbana in San Diego parish in Al Cajon. Qasha Khoshaba Sulaimon assisted me along with Qasha Gabriel Brakia who drove me to Al Cajon. Qasha Khoshaba had to drive 5 hours from Arizona to assist me for Qurbana. We had supper in the house of Yakob. It is a small congregation without our own church building. We

rented an American Church and have Qurbana every Sunday. One day they hope to build our Assyrian church there. Although it is a small congregation their Choir was good. The members were very happy to attend my Qurbana. They suggested that I should come on a Sunday so that more Assyrians could attend my Qurbana.

On Saturday 5th August I came from Oceanside to the new house of my niece Miriam. In the morning I had typed a long report for *Pourasthianadam* (Voice of the East in Malayalam). But it was lost during sending. So I typed three pages again.

Miriam's sister Miki and her husband Jay Gupta had come there. So was their mother Lalu Mooken. My brother Addison had taken me there. We talked a lot of about Trichur, our hometown. Miriam, Miki, Lalu and Addison are American citizens. I was the only Indian in that gathering. Addison can boast of dual citizenship, as a result of a new policy of allowing Indians to take US citizenship without renouncing the Indian citizenship I do not know at this stage in what way it is going to benefit the Indians. If the war comes, whether in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon (or where else) the Indian-Americans of dual citizenship will be recruited along with born Americans.

The Holy Qurbana in Tarzana in Los Angeles was on August 6th. Addison drove me from Oceanside where he lives now. We thought that it would take two and a half hours. But we reached the church at 9.30 a.m. having left at about 7.30 a.m. It was possible only because of a Sunday morning. If it were a Monday

morning it would take at least 3 hours. A Friday afternoon could take 4 hours. After Holy Qurbana we had a good breakfast in the hall as usual. I went to the house of Deacon Walter Rouel and Lydia where I had stayed two years ago.

On Monday early morning Qasha Gewargis Bet Rasho had offered to drive me to the airport. But he will have to leave his home before 3 a.m. So Deacon Walter offered to take me at 4 a.m. and want back to his work in the morning. Indian people should learn from the hardworking Americans. In the land of opportunities we have to learn to work hard. There to wake up at 3 a.m. is not a problem. In my country I have not met any body willing to get up before 5 a.m. I said 5 a.m. because I get up at 5 a.m. But most people in Trichur get up at 6 a.m. or even later.

Qasha Brakia had invited me to visit his parish again in 2007 with a relaxed time table. Then a month later I was shocked to read his obituary. Qasha Gabriel Brakhia was born in Beirut, Lebanon on July 15, 1951 to Rihana and Asiat Brakhia. He came to U.S. in 1973 and lived in Yonkers, New York as a member of Mar Mari Parish, Assyrian Church of the East. His wife is Anna Marie Elia and their daughter is Samara, now aged 21.

Deacon Brakhia was promoted as priest on July 11, 1999 when Fr.Dr.George Toma was transferred from New Britain, Connecticut to Chicago. In April 2005 Qasha Brakhia was transferred to Orange County parish near Los Angeles. The

5 year old priest was healthy and visited gym to keep him fit. e died of a massive heart attack that killed him on the spot, hen he had just finished a game of racket ball at the gym!

he funeral service took place at the St. Mary's church in arzana, Los Angeles. Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis, hor Bishop David Royal of San Jose and the Fr. George et Rasho and other priests conducted the service.

is death is a great loss to the church as well as to his family. lay his soul rest in peace. Qasha Gabri, as he is usually nown, assisted me in his former parish in New Britain, onnecticut on July 22 where he had gone to do baptism of e grand child of Mrs. Marsha Gallow. Qasha invited me to service in his parish of Mar Poulose *Shleeha in Anaheim*, alifornia known as Orange County parish.

ince I was not free on any Sunday in my tight schedule he ranged for me to celebrate Holy Qurbana on Wednesday nd August. And also he arranged for me to celebrate in his eighbouring parish in San Diego on Friday August 4th. After at he invited me to come next year for celebrating Holy urbana in these two parishes on Sundays. He wanted me to e with him for at least one week. He died 40 days later. lay his soul rest in peace. My condolences to the bereaved mily.

Chapter 4

Detroit, Michigan

I went to Detroit on Monday August 7th to meet our Catholicos Patriarch His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV who resides in Chicago. His Holiness had come to Detroit to celebrate Holy Qurbana on August 6th. It was also to encourage the congregation which is working hard to complete the construction of their beautiful new church in the name of Mart Mariam.

On April 17, 2005 His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV had laid foundation stone for the new church of Mart Mariam to replace the old existing church in a different neighbourhood. The Honorable Mayor of Warren near Detroit Mr. Mark Steenburg spoke on the occasion. Mr.Richard Sulaqa, the city clerk, also spoke. The authorities announced that the work of this church would be completed on war footing speed within a year.

Since the church is dedicated to the name of Mart Mariam, the congregation wished it to be consecrated on Mart Mariam Memorial Day on 15th August, 2006 or two days earlier on August 13 to coincide it with a Sunday. I had arranged a large bronze bell of 80 kilos to be transported to Detroit from Trichur. Since Trichur does not have a harbour or an airport I had to pack the bell well and send to Cochin for shipment.

We were told that we had to unpack the bell and obtain a certificate that this bell is not an archeological important article worth much money. On the production of the bill for bell from the casting factory the officials in Cochin issued certificate that it was a new bell.

With all the delays for obtaining certificate I lost all hope of getting that bell on to the new church before dedication. Finally they assured me the delivery of the bell would be made in the week of the proposed consecration. It got delayed further. At last it arrived Detroit the day of my departure from Detroit to India. The dedication of the church was further postponed because the work was not concluded in war footing.

On my arrival I knew that not only the bell but also other parts of the church structure were not completed. Now as I record these words the consecration of the church is finally fixed to take place on May 6, 2007. They are not going to wait till the Memorial of St. Mary on 15 August 2007. They have already waited too long after August 2006. A construction of a church is not easy. Money has to be raised. Materials to be purchased in time for builders to do their duty. Sabah Yohannan telephoned me to go to Detroit for the consecration of the church in May 2007.

On the evening of August 7, 2006 I went with the Catholicos Patriarch to have Supper in the house of Fr. Benjamin Benjamin. I had stayed in that home two years ago. I was wearing the blue cassock, which Fr. Benjamin

bought for me in Detroit during that visit. I met Mr. Dave David, Mr. Sabah Yohannan and other committee members for the dinner. I was happy to meet Aprim Murad, uncle of Jenny Yacoub in whose house I had gone for dinner two weeks earlier in Wiesbaden, Germany.

On Tuesday we had breakfast along with His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV in the house of Deacon Lawrence Namato whom I used to meet in Chicago since 1996. After His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV accompanied by Qasha Antwan Latchin started driving back to Chicago. I said good bye to them and shifted my stay to the residence of the Qasha Benjamin.

On Wednesday Fr. Benjamin and Mr. Sabah took me to the Canadian Consulate for visa to visit Canada. I met the Priest of the Church of South India in Chicago who came there with his family for obtaining visa for Canada for a short visit. Another young man from Kerala too was there. He is doing doctoral studies in Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago. He is son of a priest of the Mar Thoma Church. But he is going to be ordained a priest in the Lutheran Church this year. It is not official ecumenism but some sort of practical ecumenism.

Since I had official invitation from Bishop Emmanuel of Canada the visitor's visa was easy. But to my disappointment the officer at the visa counter told me that I have not filled up all details such as my family status like single or divorced etc. Then I

realized that the blank application form which I filled up was from the previous year. Qasha Benjamin took the blank forms of the Canadian Consulate of the previous year in order to save time. But with more divorces etc they added more columns in the application form. Anyhow they were kind enough to let me add my marriage status as celibrate bishop and obtain my visa without further delays and questions.

One lesson I learned was that the application for visa or anything else should be the latest. Otherwise it will take one more day to wait for the result of the old application forms and fill up again new forms.

With Assyrians in Winsor, Canada on 17 August 2006

Chapter 5

Canada

On Thursday 10th August my Assyrian friend Sabah Yohannan, whom I call my *Qayyuma*, Representative, drove me to Toronto to the house of Paul Johnson and Usha in Vaughn, a suburb of Toronto. Since my attempt to get directions to house in Mapquest in the internet did not succeed, I telephoned to him and asked for directions. Since I never learned driving I was not good in navigating also. Still we managed to reach there without stopping on the way.

Johnson's wife Usha and her mother Mary were waiting to receive me. After an Indian lunch Sabah left. Then he called me in his cell phone to say that Bishop Mar Emmanuel of Toronto was waiting for me.

As the Bishop was not at home when we telephoned we were hesitating to go to him. When the bishop goes out there is nobody to answer the phone. He has no cook or driver as I have. Hence it is difficult to know when the bishop will be back home. In foreign countries servants are expensive. The bishops have to learn to cook and drive. I do not know what I would have done if I was sent to a foreign country. As soon as I heard that he was waiting for me I decided to go to him to spend at least one day.

Francis Palissery, eldest brother of Usha came and drove me to the Bishop's House. Bishop Emmanuel is a scholarly Bishop. His teacher of Aramaic was Archdeacon Kaku Lazar who

when he was a deacon had taught me the same language in India in 1956, exactly half a century ago. Bishop Emmanuel studied in Michael College, a Catholic Seminary and took a M.Div. degree and then he took an M.A. in Syriac Studies from the University of Toronto. He is trying to earn a Ph.D. from the same University.

On Saturday morning Mr. Binoy Jacob came to take me to his house. Bishop recognized him, because he had come with his father Jacob to invite him for the opening of the Orthodox Church in Toronto some eight years ago. It was a pleasant stay in the house of Binoy, as his wife Dr. Nishy Ph.D. was known to me when she was a young girl in Bangalore in 1964. Her mother's mother was a close friend of my mother and a great supporter in starting the Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage in Trichur in 1962.

On the same evening I moved to the house of Sunny Nellangara, the younger brother of my second brother –in-law Dr N.V.George of Rugby, England. My second cousin Darmo Mooken and his wife came to see me in that house. His brother Chinnan Mooken was in Norway where his son a medical doctor trained in Hungary was working. Sunny and Shantha took me to church on Sunday. As he had not seen the new Assyrian church we planned to start one hour early. But we reached the new Church near the airport in less than half an hour.

Mart Mariam Church in Toronto is the cathedral of Bishop Mar Emmanuel of Canada. There were about a thousand people present for the Holy Qurbana. As the work of fixing tiles in the altar was only half done we were not able to use

the altar. Therefore we did Holy Qurbana in the front of the altar. There was not enough room for the people to stand inside the church. Bishop Emmanuel and Archdeacon Odisho along with six deacons assisted. I had difficulty in breaking the small pieces of holy bread still smaller. I prayed God to help me to give to all people at least a small piece, because they were coming with expectation.

After Qurbana the choir sang a song of welcome. A little girl gave me flowers. Deacon Basim Nona gave me a special gift of 1150 Canadian Dollars (about 1000 US) to educate a priest for one-year in our Seminary in India. He plans to give such an amount for three more years. He says that he did not give himself as a full time priest. So he wants to help somebody else to be priest. He works really hard as a mechanic. He gave a big contribution to build that church. Sometimes I feel that many Assyrians are willing to give to the Church more than what most Indians give.

On Sunday after Holy Qurbana I went to the house of Joly and Seena Palissery. In the evening I moved to Paul Johnson. On Monday Dr. P.M.Thomas and Shantha from Hamilton came to see me. Thomas was my senior in Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur for B.D. studies in 1957. Another student, who was my junior in Jabalpur Dr. Daniel Thomas, telephoned me and insisted that I should visit Montreal in my next visit. Dr. Daniel Thomas was a professor of Religions in Montreal. He is now an ordained priest in the Orthodox Church.

On Tuesday Inasu Nadakavukaren picked me up. He took

me to the China exhibition in the Ontario Place. It was an attractive exhibition. The admission fee was Canadian $25 per person. It was worth it. Both sons of Inasu and Ayesha are doctors doing residency in USA, one in Cincinnati, Ohio and the other in Rochester, N.Y. Dr. Sanjay and Dr. Sunil had come to meet me in Budapest, Hungary three years ago.

They are interested in our Church. Their father's maternal grandfather O.T. Inasu was conferred with a rare title of Athletha. He donated 52 acres of land for our Seminary 52 years ago. I pray both these young doctors will get God fearing wives in the near future. After Qurbana I visited Joly Palissery and Seena. Ayesha is reading a lot of spiritual books. She is leading prayer groups. Some housewives have time. Their children are grown up and are of their own. Our lay people, if they have time, should take interest in spiritual affairs.

Sunny Nellangara and his wife Shanta along with Dharmo Mooken and his wife in Toronto in August 2006, Photo Taken by Mar Aprem

On Wednesday Inasu took me to Sunny Nellangara. After a chat for a few minutes Sunny and Shantha drove me to London, about two hours from Toronto. It was not a new route to them. They used to drive that way every fortnight at the time of when their son Lona was studying in London. Now he is practicing law in New York. There were new roads as we reached London.

I spent Wednesday in the house of Wilson Padavan. We had a quick prayer meeting. The following people attended a post-dinner prayer meeting arranged in a short notice.

1. Rev. Canon Sam Thomas and Dr. Sally Thomas.
2. Rev. John Varghese
3. Dr. P. K. Kuruvilla and Annamma
4. Annamma Thomas
5. P. K. Abraham and Annakutty
6. Dr. George Thomas
7. Joseph Neelankavil and Catharine
8. Dr. Sabu George and Dr. Rosamma George

It is interesting that Rev. Sam Thomas is a canon in the Church of Canada. He is a member of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar. Since there is inter-communion between the Anglican Church and the Mar Thoma Syrian Church based in Kerala. Sam Thomas opted to be ordained in the Church of Canada rather than his mother Church.

In prayer meeting I spoke about the assembly of the WCC held in Brazil in February 2006 to this selected audience of Kerala people invited by Wilson Padavan. Sicily, wife of Wilson is a teacher in a College. She is in Canada even before Wilson went to Canada. Wilson's son Dean is doing residency as a doctor in New York after having studied medicine in Grenada.

On Thursday Wilson and his daughter Donna (a Ph.D. student) drove me to Windsor. Some Assyrians in Windsor had gathered in the house of Edmond. We had a dinner in that house. I talked with a group of Assyrians, talking about our Church history. That is a small parish inside Canada and therefore under the jurisdiction of Bishop Mar Emmanuel of Canada. At the same time it is only within one hour for the priest of the Detroit parish to come and conduct services there. There are our own Assyrian churches in Toronto and London in Canada. But the Assyrian community in Windsor is small. Still they invited me to conduct a Holy Qurbana for them in Windsor. Since I had only one Sunday left and I had to do Qurbana in Detroit on that Sunday. I told the Assyrians that I would consider it in a future visit. Sabah Yohannan drove me to Detroit.

I had a Saturday left. But I had promised to do Holy Qurbana in Flint, Michigan as I have never done Qurbana in that old parish of ours. Deacon Lawrence Namato since he moved from Chicago to Ann Arbor had been inviting me to do a service in Flint. Fr. Yosip Pera of the Flint parish invited me the previous year to do Qurbana in that parish. So I arranged

Saturday August 19th for Flint and Sunday 20th for Detroit. Unfortunately some important Assyrian died in Flint and the clergy had to attend the funeral on Saturday morning and hence the Flint plan was cancelled.

Detroit Again

On Thursday August 17th I reached Detroit again. On Friday we had the visit of Cor episcopa Dr. George Thoma from Chicago. Edwin Cannon, a young man from Chicago had accompanied him. Edwin showed me Wickipedia and showed me the information he had gathered about our Church and prelates in his website on Nochia.

Edwin is studying to be an electrical engineer. But he is very much interested in our Church and its history. He is Nochiaya. That is why his website is called Nochia. That's the name of the tribe to which our Catholicos Patriarch belongs. Actually the parents of Edwin were born in the same village of Nochiya where His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV was born 71 years ago, i.e. 15 September 1935, less than five years before I was born.

The tribe of Nochiya is known as the tribe of the Matran. That means Mar Khananisho Metropolitan. The last Khananisho Metropolitan named Mar Yosip died in July 1977. He is considered a saintly Metropolitan. I consider that it was my privilege for me to meet him in 1962 in Baghdad when I was only a deacon. His uncle Mar Isaac Khananisho Metropolitan had consecrated Mar Benyamin Shimon Patriarch in 1903 in Kochanes in Kurdistan.

On Saturday we spent some time visiting our new church building nearing completion. We met with some Assyrian friends in the Ryan Restaurant, which Deacon Lawrence Namato runs with another deacon of our church.

On Sunday 20th August I celebrated Holy Qurbana in Mart Mariam Church. Since their new church was not ready for service I conducted service in the old church where I had celebrated Holy Qurbana two years ago. After Qurbana we had the baptism of three children. Two boys (Ashur and Addai) of one family and a girl, Christha of another family. Although the girl is older we baptized the boys first. Discrimination to women !

There are questions in the minds of the people today whether it is right to push women to the back. Our present rules were made when women had no important role in the Church. But in the modern world our Church may have to think whether this rule is justifiable or not. We may not consecrate women as priests and bishops as some Protestants do, but we cannot ignore the rights of women in the Church.

On April Fools day 2007 some Vandals defaced the outside of the new church, at **4320 in 14 Mile,** by spraying anti-Arab threats onto the building. The church is scheduled to host its first Mass on May 6 by His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East after nearly 20 years at its location on Toepfer Road. Construction crews discovered the vandalism Monday morning. Among the messages left in blue and black paint were "1 God Jesus" and "Arabs Die." Most were left at the rear of

the building. "It's not so much anger I feel but more a sense of disappointment," said Ashurina Mirza, a 21-year-old member of the congregation whose father helped build the original church two decades ago. "To know that the people in our church poured their hearts and souls into something and see someone try to destroy it. it's disappointing."

The religious undertones of the messages left on the church suggested perpetrators are anti-Muslim. But church members think that, as the name suggests, are Catholics. And the number of crosses adorning the building, including a giant wooden cross over the western entrance, would seem to make it clear St. Mary's is a Christian church. Inside the church's entryway are writings that may appear Arabic, but they are actually Aramaic. The Michigan Department of Civil Rights is looking into the incident and plan to offer assistance to church members and the community at large. "These kinds of things are generally not based on people airing legitimate concerns," said Harold Core, a department spokesman.

Warren Mayor Honorable Mark Steenbergh issued a statement on Tuesday: "This kind of vandalism sickens me. People of all religions have the right to worship without having to put up with this kind of hatred. "

Warren Police Chief Jere Green said he will increase patrols around places of worship in the area.

On Maundy Thursday that is 5th April most religious leaders including the Roman Catholic Cardinal visited the premises of this vandalized church and offered prayers. In spite of the

vandalism this new Church of Mart Mariam will be dedicated on May 6th as scheduled.

On Sunday night we had dinner with the committee members. The next day I enquired about the bell that was expected on 22nd August. Then I said goodbye to Fr.Benjamin and his wife Juliet and the second daughter Dalida. Mr. Sabah drove me to the airport and accompanied me to the security area. There was announcement that we were not allowed to carry toothpaste, hair cream etc. I reluctantly threw them away in the garbage can. I did not throw away the insulin and syringe. I felt that I needed it at least when I would reach Frankfurt after eight hours or so.

It was not legal because I did not have the prescription of the doctor on my insulin bottle with my name on it. As a security measure they have to take photo, thumb impression etc. for non–American passengers. We had such rule when we entered USA after the September 11 incident. But now we have this procedure for leaving the USA also. They do not do it to the North Americans. I hope that the Americans are nice peace loving people. The terrorists are only among us, who had no American or Canadian passport. I do not know whether those who caused September 11 tragedy do have American passport.

Without complaint we obey all the rules they make to combat terrorism. It is for the safety of all of us Americans as well as Asians. I have a feeling that some passengers may go to the International court in Hague against such discrimination

because all passengers are potential terrorists, whether Americans or not. In November 1995 when Isaac Rabin, Prime Minister of Israel was shot dead while some of us were in Israel, I enquired what religion or nationality the assassin had. I was relieved when I heard that the assassin was a Jew from Israel. Otherwise foreigners belonging to Christian and Muslim would have detained for detailed interrogation in Israel. We returned on the day of the funeral of the Prime Minister.

After I was airborne from Detroit I decided to check my e-mail. Because there was an announcement that it would be thrill to receive and send e-mails from the high skies. But I realized that Linksys card was not enough to access the hot post. I must have credit card or global roaming in order to access Internet. There is a charge for accessing Internet from the heights. I do not know how much it will be. I hope that it is not as high as the skies we are flying.

Anyhow I decided to type this part of the travelogue before I forget. I had a similar plan throughout my journey. But I did not succeed in it. Because a few hours I get in the house of friends should not be utilized only to type travelogues on my laptop, but to talk with people. When I was in the aircraft I decided to type this page. It is indeed a thrill to write or type from the heights. Of course I was in Sterling Heights in Michigan a few hours ago.

But now I am in real Heights. I do not know exactly how high above the sea level we are cruising. In my watch it is 10 p.m. on Monday. I am likely to sleep after some time. But in the land of our destination, the time is 4 a.m. or 5 a.m. on Tuesday morning. The flight time is 7 hours and 30 minutes. So on Tuesday I would be in Madras, India at 11.45 p.m. that is on Tuesday 22nd August 2006.

The flying time from Detroit to Frankfurt was 8 hours and from Frankfurt to Madras was 8 hours 45 minutes. Thus the total flying time from Detroit to Madras was less than 17 hours. Then there was the waiting period of three hours in Frankfurt. There is a difference of 10 and half hours between Detroit and Madras. When you add up all these things the journey from Detroit to Madras meant nearly two days.

Before I left Canada I got an e mail from John Chandy of Madras stating that he has come to know that my flight from Detroit is via Madras in India and so he invited me to stop over night in his home and he will put me back in the Madras domestic airport to fly to Cochin. Lufthansa was flying to Madras, Bangalore or Bombay or Delhi. What I needed was a direct flight from Frankfurt to Cochin. Otherwise I would arrive just after midnight and we would have to spend a sleepless night before catching an early morning flight to Cochin. Usually we get exhausted when we reach India. That is the second night in the flight and a sleep is essential. For a few hours rest I would not disturb our church members living

in Madras, Bangalore or Bombay. So I prefer to sleep on the floor of the airport from 1 to 4 after the midnight.

This trip I planned in such a way that I could go to my priest in Madras Fr .Jos K. John for a sleep and catch the domestic flight to Cochin by noon. Since there was chicken pox in the family of the priest on those days, John Chandy took me to his house. When I got up I was pleasantly surprised to see Franklyn, elder sister of Filly, wife of John Chandy. Franklyn was married to my sister Susheela's son Varghese George in England where I stayed the previous year, during my visit.

Franklyn and her two children Joel and Amelia were staying there for a few days on their way back to London. Amelia who is only two or three years old looked at her Dad's uncle in surprise. When she saw her elder brother Joel coming to me she too came to sit near her grand uncle. I had baptized these children, as well as their Dad in Trichur. I watched on TV in their home in Wembley our Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha attending the funeral of Pope John Paul II in April 2005.

Those few hours rest in Madras was a great relief. When I reached Cochin airport and proceeded to Trichur by car. I realized that I am no longer the young man I used to be in my previous travels. Although young in heart my body had completed 66 years.

Chapter 6

Fourth Visit to UAE (October 2006)

My fourth trip to UAE was planned in connection with my visit to Vienna. As I booked Emirates flight to Vienna, a stop was allowed on the way. My relative Mr.Thimothy Mooken was my host in UAE like my three previous visits. He was prompt in obtaining a visa for me as usual.

But it was fourteen days prior to my scheduled departure. Visa was issued on 21st Sept. I was to arrive in UAE on 4th October. My flight was booked for the 4th October. As I had fixed Holy Qurbana in Sharjah on Friday October 6th for our 100 members from India and the Middle East.

The Austrian visa to visit Vienna was expected on Friday Sept 29 from their consulate in New Delhi. But they refused to stamp visa in my passport stating that the photos I submitted was not good. I was asked to submit new photos. Living 2000 miles far from New Delhi it was not easy to send new photos. When I asked he Consulate in New Delhi one man said that I have to call between two and three in the afternoon on Tuesday, because Saturday and Sunday were holidays and Monday was holiday being Oct 2nd the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. I begged him to stamp the visa in my passport and return my passport to my travel agent as I had fixed programe in UAE. He never heeded my plea.

I asked the photographer to make a new photo. He said that

he could develop it in his computer and issue new photos within two hours. But there was no electricity in our area, as there was some repair going on the electric lines. When my travel agent rushed from Cochin to Trichur he looked at the new photos and said that was not enough. The Consulate wants to see the photo of my face only and not my beard. Thus new photos were made. The next day I arranged two deacons to go on a bike from Trichur to Cochin airport to deliver this small envelope of my photo to air cargo. It cost about Rs.300 for Sahara Airlines to take it the same day to Delhi.

The Visa Agent in Delhi collected it from the Sahara Airlines and submitted it in the Austrian Consulate on Tuesday morning Oct 3rd. When I telephoned on Tuesday morning, the man in the Consulate repeated the message of Friday afternoon, "call between two and three in the afternoon". I obeyed him and called at 2 p.m. sharp. After many trials I got him in the phone between two and three on Wednesday. I said, "Sir, your office told me last Friday to call on Tuesday between two and three". He replied, "It was I only who told you to call on Tuesday. But the visa people had to go out on emergency. So you call tomorrow." I felt helpless.

The next day they were kind enough to issue the visa. They did not affix the new photos I submitted. Instead they put a remark *Gultig Ohne Lichtbild* in German and "Valid without photograph" in English. I was angry in my mind, why did they demand new photograph, if they were going to stamp the visa without photo. Anyhow they released my passport

only by noon when the flights to Cochin had left. So the Visa Agent had to send it to Madras. My travel agent flew from Cochin to Madras to collect it at night and fly back to Cochin to reach before my flight to Dubai on 5th October.

I thought all problems were solved. But I was flying in a postponed flight that is on Thursday instead of Wednesday as originally planned. Therefore when I reached Dubai they told me that my on line visa disappeared from the computer screen some two and half hours ago. Visa expired. The immigration authorities asked me to get new papers and submit to the man inside the immigration. When Thimothy Mooken got new papers from the city immigration office they said that the papers were not enough. It should be a regular visa that means a new visa.

Finally I bought a ticket to return to Cochin. It was decided that the Holy Qurbana will be conducted the following week when I come again. My booking for Vienna was only on 17th. Where will I stay for ten days? After two or three hours of uncertainty wisdom began to dawn on me. My visa to Austria was valid from the date of issue that is 4th October till 20th. So I preponed my flight to Vienna from 17th to 7th. The Emirates could arrange hotel visa for transit passengers up to a maximum of 4 days. I booked only for 2 days as hotels were expensive.

I had to spent more than 300 Euros for a one way ticket to Cochin. Although I cancelled the Cochin ticket they said that money would be refunded from the city office on Monday only. So I had no money for a hotel visa. They said, "No

problem, Give me your credit card". I do not know whether he believed me when I told him that I had never had a credit card all these 66 years. I have travelled abroad 54 times and never owned a credit card. I bought a telephone card and called Mr. Chacko Konikara, our UAE parish trustee about the latest situation that I have cancelled Cochin flight and preponed my Vienna ticket. I needed about 260 dollars for 2 days of hotel and the visa. He came with Blesson Antony (son of Fr. Antony Kangapadan) and Renjith Jose Chemban whose marriage I had conducted two years ago.

Finally before 11 p.m. I got out of the airport. But the baggages were to be delivered after the Cochin flight would depart on Friday morning. Since my vestments and the Chalice and paten for the Holy Qurbana were in the baggage I needed it before Holy Qurbana on Friday morning. So on Friday morning Blesson and Renjith went to the airport. They were asked to come back after an hour. Then they came to the hotel to meet me. I said that I would come with them to get delivery of my two bags. They said that they would get it. Later the officers changed their decision and gavé only one bag and insisted that I should be present to claim the second bag. So they came back to the hotel and we hurried to the airport, because it was about 10 a.m. and have to commence the Holy Qurbana at 10.30 a.m.

The scan machine showed some metal in my bag. That is the reason why they held it up. Actually my hand baggage was carefully packed without toothpaste, hair oil etc. But those

things were kept in this checked - in baggage. I do not understand why they scan after the journey was over. They had checked it in Cochin before departure. If the tooth paste, hair oil etc could not detonate like a bomb during the flight, why should they worry about the baggage after the journey was over. There were no stations in the air where I could collect some dangerous items or weapons during the four hour flight up in the skies. Moreover we had no access to our checked- in baggage.

Fr. E.V.Antony arrived the same day. Qurbana on Friday held at the CSI chapel near the Malayalam CSI service. Assyrians such as Zaia George, Rony Awiqam and others attended. Indians such as Timothy Mooken, Chacko Konikara, E.K. Johnson, Blesson Antony, Renjith Chemban, John Lazar, E.K.Johnson, Julie Ashok, Sajimon Nellissery and others attended. On Saturday I left Dubai for Vienna. Report from the parish reads as follows:

UAE Parish (MART MARIAM Church)

Presently based in Sharjah. We have a committee consisting of Kurien Thomas and Chacko Konikara (Trustees) Thimothy Mooken and George Zia (Advisors) T L Johnson (Treasurer) E K Johnson (Auditor) Blesson Antony (Youths' Association Secretary) and Mrs. Julie Ashok Abraham (Ladies Association Secretary).

Mar Aprem Metropolitan visited the UAE parish on 5th and 6th October 2006 on his way to Pro Oriente meetings in Vienna. He celebrated Holy Qurbana on Friday October 6th at the CSI church hall in Sharjah where he had celebrated Holy Qurbana in March 2006 while returning from the WCC assembly in Brazil. Fr. E V Antony came from Trichur to assist the Metropolitan. As usual people from Kerala as well as the Assyrians from Iraq, Iran, Syria and Lebanon were attended. Engineer Zia Marcus George, Rony Awiqam George, Ward Zia, Mrs. Rita, Mr. Sadee and others were there as in the previous occasions.

Among the Kerala people Blesson, son of Fr. Antony Kangapadan, was a new comer who came to UAE after the Qurbana in March. He was very active in arranging this Qurbana. He is regular every Friday attending prayer meeting in St. Philip Chapel in Sharjah which we have rented from 7 to 9.30 a.m. every Friday. Let us all pray for a young man working in UAE to dedicate his life as an honorary deacon to help this congregation to lead Friday prayers. Chacko Konikara, Thimothy Mooken, Julie Ashok, Renjith Chemban, E K Johnson, T L Johnson, Kurien Thomas, John Lazar, Sajimon and many others were also there.

On Friday, after Qurbana I took some rest in the hotel. My relative Chevalier Cheeran Varkey and the Assyrian friend engineer Zaia George telephoned me. I did not go out that day. I was really tired by the ordeals of the previous day in

Dubai airport. A Keralite working in that hotel sent an e mail with scanned pages from my Passport to Fr.Odisho Samano in Moscow for processing my visa to visit Russia.

On Saturday October 7th Thimothy Mooken and his sister Mrs. Bindu Moffat, saw me off at Dubai airport on my way to Vienna. This was my fourth visit to Dubai during last two years.

On Sunday 13th May 2007 the Government of Kerala signed an agreement with the TECOM company of Dubai to begin a 'Smart City' (I.T Park) in Cochin. Dubai Royal family member Ahmad Bib Bayat, the Director- General of Dubai Holding Company which controls TECOM came to Trivandrum, capital city of Kerala to ink this agreement. People of Kerala are looking forward to the quick implementation of this project which will definitely provide employment for many people. This Smart City which is located in Kakkanad in Cochin (within 70 kilometers from Trichur) will help the people of Kerala. Still I have serious doubts in my mind whether the people of Kerala will work in this Smart City as hard as they work while they are employed in Dubai.

Dubai is on the news in Kerala so often. Dubai companies are planning to develop business in Kerala. Many engineers, technicians and construction workers are going to Dubai, Sharjah area in these days. Therefore I hope that we will have more members in our UAE parish in the future. I also hope Assyrians will co-operate with our Indian parish in UAE.

I saw the news on the TV that two ladies from Kerala have started working as taxi drivers in Dubai. They run the pink colored taxies which charges 6 dirhams instead of 3 dirhams.

Burj' Dubai, the famous tower in Dubai, is going to be one of the top ten tallest towers in the world. During the one and a half years between April 2005 and October 2006 I have noticed a lot of constructions going on in Dubai area. Thousands of people from Kerala, from Christian, Muslim and Hindu religions are working in UAE. The number is being increasing. An engineer who gets 4000 rupees in Kerala is getting 4000 dirhams in UAE. That means about Rs. 46,000/-. Nearly 12 times more than what he gets in Kerala.

I could not visit UAE parish in 2007 as anticipated. During March 2006 – July 2008, I did not make any foreign travel. Yet UAE parish has progressed. Fr. Jose Jacob Vengassary who was going to do his Ph.D in Old Testament studies in Germany was asked to break journey in Dubai. He could conduct Holy Qurbana as Fr. Victor Kollannur had arrived on the day of Qurbana and was able to assist. Since then he got a job in Joy Alukkas Jewellery in Sharjah belonging to Mr. Joy Alukka hailing from Trichur. He kindly consented to employ Fr. Victor Kollannur in his Jewelry and permitted him to do our holy service on Friday morning. Now Deacon Sachin Thimothy B.Sc., M.B.A has gone to search for a job there as well as to assist our parish.

Chapter 7

Vienna, AUSTRIA (October 2006)

I reached Vienna airport on 7th Saturday. I contacted Ludwig Niestelberger. Fr. Tabor, Shamasha Yacoub, Nasser Elia and others. Holy Qurbana was on Sunday Oct. 15th.

Pro Oriente meeting was on 18th and 19th October. Archbishop Powathil, Fr. Geevarghese Chediath, Fr. Baby Varghese, Mor Theophilus where the other Indian delegates.

My host in Vienna in June 1990 was Mr. Ludwig Niestelberger. He and his wife Martina were very good to me in showing the city of Vienna and taking me to the one-man seminar arranged by Pro Oriente. For the last 16 years we kept in touch through the **Voice of the East** Magazine. As I had to reach Vienna earlier than scheduled owing to the complications of Visa in UAE I decided to ask their help to contact our priest Fr. Tabor by phone.

Bishop Mar Odisho Oraham of Sweden had sent me the telephone number of Fr. Tabor. But he switched off the phone most of the daytime. Mr. Niestelberger began to check of the phone numbers of our Assyrian people in a book about the eastern churches in Austria. The name of Shamasha Edmond Peto was there, but a different spelling. I gave his spelling from the mailing list of the **Voice of the East** magazine. Thus he was contacted. But he was very busy that week in the Post Office in Linz where he works.

He was good enough to give the phone number of Deacon Yacoub of Vienna. He works in a restaurant, so was his wife. Mrs. Yacoub speaks better English. She assured Mrs. Niestelberger would meet me the next day. Shamasha Yacoub came to meet me in the hotel Auhof. He took me out to the restaurant. Then we went to the seminary where Fr. Tabor resides. He is a tall handsome young priest from the tribe of Jelu. He had finished studies in the Babel College in Baghdad, Iraq and is now studying Philosophy in Vienna. I think this is his third year of study.

There was an Indian Orthodox priest Fr. Joy who is studying in Vienna. He was secretary to the late Catholicos Mar Thoma Mathews II who had visited our Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV at Trichur in January 2000 and later on 2002 or 2003 at Morton Grove, Chicago. His successor Catholicos Didymos I was welcomed in Chicago by our Patriarch in July 2006.

On Sunday 15th October I celebrated Holy Qurbana in the Priest Seminary which is seminary where there are about 15 monks. We use that Seminary church for our Holy Qurbana. More than a hundred Assyrians were there before I reached the church accompanied by Deacon Yacoub and his father in law Mr. Nasser who had come with his car to take me from hotel Auhof in Auhofstrasse. After Holy Qurbana we took photos with the Choir members, all girls. Qasha Tabor Sargon was there to receive me.

Breakfast was served in the dining hall. There were occasions to meet people. One of them told me that he had attended my

Qurbana in Urumia in March 1998. The majority of the people were from Iran. One family was to leave for USA the next day. Many other Assyrians of that parish were waiting in Vienna to get visa to USA. After Qurbana Shamasha and his father-in-law Nasser and his family took me to his apartment on the fourth floor of the building near the airport area. There was no lift or elevator to climb four floors. It will be a difficult task to climb up and down daily. It will be a good exercise. You do not need to go to a gym if you live in the fourth floor. In India I think that sanction will be given for apartment complexes, only if there is a lift.

Assyrians do not have a church of our own in Austria. But the Roman Catholics are kind enough to the Eastern Churches in the area and provide facilities for worship.

To my surprise there were about 200 Assyrians seated in the church waiting for me. Since I could not find a suitable person to interpret my sermon to Assyrian or German I asked Fr. Tabor to deliver the sermon. After Qurbana I said a few words with my Assyrian and English. The believers must have understood something from my gestures.

There was a warm welcome and Breakfast after Qurbana. I was able to talk with some Assyrians, as I was not in any hurry. Moreover I had to wait until Deacon Yacoub and his father-in-law Naser Eilia finished all cleaning and arranging the hall in the same monastery. We were given permission to use these facilities because they do not have many monks as in the past. I am told that the monastic vocations are less these days.

Naser Eilia and his wife had arranged a sumptuous dinner in their home. The afternoon I spent with them provided me a chance to check my E-mails as well as to see the pictures of the visit of our Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV in Erbil, Dohuk area. I also saw the Holy Qurbana being celebrated in that area (I think Erbil). It is produced by Ishtar TV of North Iraq. They broadcast programs of the Chaldean Catholic Church as well as our Church.

Some of the Assyrians present for the Holy Qurbana were from Iran. Several of them were there in transit on their way to USA. They were leaving their country Iran permanently for USA where their relatives had gone earlier. Cardinal Schonbrun had assisted many Assyrians to go from Vienna to USA. There was a lay woman who felt the sad situation of these Assyrians in Vienna and sought the help of the Cardinal for obtaining emigration papers for the Assyrians from Iran.

Qasha Samano of Moscow continued to send me E-mails stating that he would be sending the permission for visa from Moscow government to the Consulate in Vienna. As I did not know the Consulate building in Vienna Mr. Niestelberger took me in his car to the Russian consulate on Oct 17, which was a Tuesday. When we finally reached the Consulate we saw the notice that the Consulate will work only on 3 days a week namely Monday, Wednesday and Friday. We cams back disappointed.

On Wednesday I went alone to Consulate. There was a long queue waiting in the road in the cold. After shivering in the cold for several minutes I told one man that I have permission from Moscow. Therefore when the door was opened after a few minutes to admit two or three, the man at the door was kind enough to let me inside the office. Thus I escaped the cold.

I was asked to fill in the application form printed in Russian and German. I did not know any of these languages. The lady at the office was kind enough to tell me what was written in each column. I filled it up. I have a suspicion in my mind that my answering all questions in the form was fully correct. She looked at it and said okay, may be to avoid my asking her again to translate some of the questions.

On 18th and 19th October we had Pro Oriente meeting.
On 20th I went to Moscow via Amsterdam.

Pro Oriente Studies of the Syriac Tradition

Press Release

On 18th and 19th October 2006 a meeting of 14 expert scholars from 9 countries of the Syriac Church tradition took place in Vienna. A new endeavour called "Pro Oriente Studies of the Syriac Tradition" was started. For this purpose a *Forum Syriacum* has been formed which consists of an expanded circle of expert scholars in Syriac studies. The founding members of the *Forum Syriacum* are:

- Metropolitan APREM G Mooken, India
- Metropolitan GREGORIOS Yohanna Ibrahim, Syria

- Metropolitan KURIAKOSE Theophilose, India
- Metropolitan Joseph POWATHIL, India
- Archbishop Jules Mikhael AL-JAMIL, Italy
- Archbishop Paul MATAR, Lebanon
- Archbishop Louis SAKO, Iraq
- Bishop Bawai SORO, USA
- Archdeacon Khoshaba GEORGES, Great Britain
- Father Frans BOUWEN, Israel
- Father Geevarghese CHEDIATH, India
- Father Baby VARGHESE, India
- Prof. Dietmar WINKLER, Austria
- Dr. Aho SHEMUNKASHO, Austria
- Mgr. Johan BONNY, Vatican (Observer)

From the beginning, PRO ORIENTE – as a foundation of the Archdiocese of Vienna has focused not only on the (Byzantine) Orthodox Church but has also included the Christian traditions of the Orient. In order to help the various Churches of the Syriac tradition and to preserve their unique heritage which is of importance for the whole of Christianity, the PRO ORIENTE Foundation has invited scholars and experts to study the East and West Syriac traditions.

This new *Forum* advises and consults the PRO ORIENTE Foundation to develop appropriate studies and helps to coordinate the research projects. Within the *Forum Syriacum* there should also be an exchange of current developments of the Syriac Churches, to strengthen the solidarity of those who belong to the Syriac tradition.

Concerning theme and method for research, *PRO ORIENTE Forum Syriacum* chooses topics for research and the

appropriate approaches to study them. This includes *individual studies*, *regional study groups* in the Middle East, India and elsewhere, and the scholarly exchange in *academic conferences* called "*Pro Oriente Colloquia Syriaca*".

The proceedings of the *Pro Oriente Colloquia Syriaca* as well as other related studies will be published in a new series called '*Pro Oriente Studies of the Syriac Tradition*'.

The *Forum Syriacum* has elaborated a work plan with research topics which include: Church history (i.e. non-theological factors for division and the common reading of history), Syriac Churches encountering other religions and other cultures (i.e. inculturation and immigration), and liturgy, spirituality and monasticism. At the first *Colloquium Syriacum* taking place in Vienna November 5-10, 2007 the following theme will be studied:

'Syriac Churches encountering Islam: past experiences and future perspectives'

Thus the *Forum Syriacum* also reacts to the intrinsic and external challenges with which the Christians from the Middle East are confronted today. From the beginning, Pro Oriente – as a foundation of the Archdiocese of Vienna has focused not only on the (Byzantine) Orthodox Church but has also included the Christian traditions of the Orient. In order for Pro Oriente to help the various Churches of the Syriac tradition and to preserve their unique heritage which is of importance for the whole of Christianity, the Foundation has invited scholars and experts to study the East and West Syriac traditions.

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of PRO ORIENTE Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, paid a visit to the exper scholars assembled in Vienna. He welcomed and appreciated the new endeavour of the 'PRO ORIENTE Studies of the Syriac Tradition'. He expressed his concern on the current difficul situation of the Christians in the Middle East, which again forces many of them to migrate. The assistance of Cardinal Schönborn to the Christian refugees from the Middle East living in Vienna was mentioned with gratitude by the participants. Cardinal Schönborn emphasized the bridging function of those Christians in the region.

PRO ORIENTE Forum Syriacum
Vienna, October 19, 2006

Pro Oriente consultation was held again in Austria in 2007. Although I was invited I could not attend the same owing to my vertigo problem which I suffered in February 2007 in Bombay now known as Mumbai. The 2008 gathering was held in Aleppo, Syria in June. I could not gather enough courage to travel abroad.

Chapter 8

Moscow (October 2006)

VIP welcome at Moscow airport. Fr.Samano and Mr.Slava llusion and others received me at the airport Friday October 0. I did not have the worry for standing in queue for the mmigration. I was taken to an area near immigration, I sat here drinking tea while our Church people did the formalities learing the baggage and took me through the immigration nd customs authorities.

Stay was at the Danieliski Monastery, five star hotel belonging o the Moscow Patriarchate. The church was kind enough to give it for half rate, which means only $ 100 which is Rs. 500 per night. If they had not given the concession the cost would have been Rs.9000. It would have been difficult for ne to sleep if I added up Rs. 9000 every night. Rs.63000 for he seven days I stayed in that city. I did not pay it personally. Our Church in Russia paid it.

There are many hotels in the city. They are more expensive nd places of heavy drinking. One of the advertisements of uch a place state, "Come, let us spoil you a little." How little hey do not state. May be until your pocket is empty. The use f alcohol like vodka etc is a curse of that country. Since I do ot have experience with drinking I cannot write with authority what is the moderate quantity for alcohol. To keep away from ll sorts of alcohol is my advice. You can save your money, ealth and morality.

The last Assyrian funeral I attended was perhaps in 1962 in Baghdad. That was the burial of the mother of late Mar Isho Sargis, bishop of Jelu. Along with Mar Yosip Khananishu Metropolitan, Mar Isho Sargis Episcopa and Mar Yohannan Philipose Episcopa I attended that funeral which was well attended. My teacher Qasha Kaku Lazar asked me to read *Madrasha* in the cemetry. Everybody's attention was turned to the 22 years old deacon from India reading the Assyrian language.

Therefore when Qasha Samano mentioned about the funeral of an Assyrian lady named Sonia on Saturday, I went with him and conducted the service. From the home we drove to the cemetry. We lost the way. With the help of the mobile phone we reached the right place. The cemetry is common. Any religious people can pay the fee and bury their dead in that place.

On Sunday 22nd October I celebrated holy Qurbana in the Mart Mariam church. The Choir sang the reception hymn *Slothakh Awoon*. My sermon was welcomed by the believers with applause. It was interpreted in Russian language by an Assyrian with a Ph.D. degree named Nikola Yohannan. Holy Qurbana was appreciated by the worshippers. We had breakfast in the hall. Mr. Slava Illusion presented me with a gold colour plated chain, as they felt that my wooden cross was not good enough for a bishop.

On Wednesday I celebrated Holy Qurbana again on the Memorial of Rabban Pithyon. After Qurbana we had breakfast in the upper room in the church. In the evening we had dinner

in the church hall. Also there was music. I sang my favourite Hindi song:

Qushi Qushi Manau, Qushi Qushi Manau,

Qushi Qushi Manau, Qushi Qushi Manau

Bolo Bolo Mshiha ki jai jai jai,

Bolo Bolo Mshiha ki jai jai jai.

On Thursday we went to the Russian State University for the Humanities (general info in English http://rggu.com. Centre for Religious Studies http://religion.rsuh.ru/) and I delivered a lecture on Church History in the Department of Religion. Head of the Centre, Prof. Nikolai V. Shaburov received me and introduced the lecture. Dr. Alexander Agadjauian was the interpreter. Our parish priest Qasha Odisho Samano and other friends were there. A friend from the Armenian Church was there and he asked me some questions about our Church and other Churches in India. He is a well-informed person and speaks English well. In Russia many scholars do not speak English.

That evening we went to the house of Sub Deacon David of our church. We had a very sumptuous dinner in that family. That night Deacon Arsan and his wife along with their son-in-law (Qasha Samano Odisho) took me to the famous Dr. Juno. She had been decorated with medals from 169 countries. She is a very talented endocrinologist who is a champion of Alternate medicine.

I was happy to visit Nadya Davidova and her son George. They were my guests in Trichur. George played guitar. Nadya was interpreter in the embassy of USSR in New Delhi. She had a master's degree in English. It was by divine providence that she met Mr.O.T.Andrews, trustee of our Touring Mission parish in Delhi. Through Andrews Nadya came to know about me and our Assyrian Church in Trichur. Since we are more than 2000 miles far from New Delhi, visitors to Delhi do not know much about our Church. In recent years our history has been wiped out in North India. We have to restore our Church to its past glory. That is possible only by our hard work.

In 1992 when I was in Moscow I wanted to meet Dr. Juno. I told Mr. Slava Illusion, the leading member of our Church that I would like to meet Dr. Juno. He arranged it and I was so happy to have the privilege of meeting this wonder worker. She says that she hopes to give health to people at least for 200 years. I do not know whether it is a good thing to live after 70 or 80 mentioned by the Psalmist.

On Friday October 27 Qasha Samano drove me to the State Library in Kremlin. Mr. Badalov, an Assyrian was waiting for me. I went to the Library with Oriental books and read some books about our Church. I promised to give them some books written by me to be kept in that Russian State Library. The Deputy Chief of that section was with us.

Although Russian Orthodox Church is critical of the Roman Catholic Church in its effort to work in Russia the following report dated February 22, 2007 release of ZENIT www.zenit.org is encouraging.

Alexy II Congratulates a Catholic Charity

Aid to the Church in Need Is Marking 60th Anniversary

MOSCOW, FEB. 22, 2007 (Zenit.org).- Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II congratulated Aid to the Church in Need and its president, Hans Peter Röthlin, on its 60th anniversary.

The Germany-based international Catholic charity reported the letter from the patriarch of Moscow and Russia today.

The "selfless help for the Church in difficult material situations has gained the charity high respect and recognition in the whole Christian world," the Orthodox patriarch wrote. "I myself remember with joy the personal encounters, in 1992 and 1994, with the founder of the international charity, Father Werenfried van Straaten."

Aid to the Church in Need, which has national offices in 17 countries, is under the authority of the Holy See.

In his letter, Alexy II expresses his gratitude for the "inestimable help" with which Father van Straaten assisted the Russian Orthodox Church "to find a normal life after so many years of persecution under an atheist regime."

The Orthodox leader adds that "mutual support" is the foundation on which partnership and dialogue between the Churches should take place.

Also in a congratulatory letter, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad recounts "the initiatives of Father Werenfried, which have become good examples of Orthodox-Catholic cooperation," including the "reopening of theological schools

and the development of places of education and mission." ZE07022201

On the evening of October 27 Qasha Samano drove me to the Mart Mariam church for a final visit. I went to the office room upstairs to check e-mails in the computer. Then we said good bye to Mr. Slava Illusion , the donor of our church at Russia. Then Qasha drove me to the airport. On the way we had to pick up the CD s of my visit to the Church as well as to the University. I must state both the videos were well prepared professionally. He is a good movie maker and asked me to invite him to Trichur to make a good movie of our churches in India to be shown to all Assyrians around the world. His idea is great and he is professionally qualified. He speaks English too. But it is expensive to get a film maker from Russia to India for that purpose. Moreover there are several photographers and movie makers in Trichur who would like to do a similar work.

After stopping near a Bank for a few minutes to cash some money Qasha Samano drove me to the airport in good time to get the boarding pass. Some Assyrians were there to see me off. Soon I discovered that Emirates flights do not fly from that airport. As there was no time left to go to the other airport Qasha arranged a ticket in an Aeroflot flight to Dubai. Thanks to the Assyrian lady who paid for the ticket.

I was mistaken when I thought that problem was over, as I had a new ticket to Dubai. When we checked the baggage through the scanning machine they thought there was a some metal inside one of my bags. I had to take out everything and

show the contents of my baggage. There was nothing that is forbidden. Finally they let me through that area.

Then comes a bigger problem. One officer asked me to take out all my money to show him. A passenger is not allowed to carry more than 3000 dollars. I had some 1960 dollars to be given to the Mar Narsai Press which was the cost of the Syriac prayer books sent to England. I sometimes help Mar Narsai Press with correspondence with regard to Syriac prayer books. With the money for the Mar Narsai Press and the reimbursement of my ticket money I had just above 3000 dollars; I carried it because the Indian rules permit us to carry back to India up to 5000 dollars without any declaration.

India does not permit us to take foreign money out of India. But they are generous to let us bring in up to 5000 dollars without declaration. If it is more, still we are allowed. Only that we have to give a declaration in writing that I am carrying some extra dollars to India. I was tired of searching all the cash from three bags. Although I told him I have only the permissible money being taken to India. But he said that the Russian rule is 3000 and so you have to show me everything. Our priest and friends began to argue with him. Finally he asked me to fill in their declaration form.

Since I do not know Russian I have to be careful filling up some declarations without understating the meaning. Anyhow my friends explained some of the questions in the form. I signed it and let me pass through that ordeal. What a contrast between arrival and departure, Arrival was a VIP welcome. Departure was terribly bad. My friend told me, "You will have a lot to

write in your travelogue about this trip." He was right. I do not want this experience again. From Moscow I flew by Aeroflot to Dubai and by Emirates flight from Dubai to Cochin to reach on Saturday October 28th morning.

As the Assyrians said final good bye to me they could guess from my face that my blood pressure was going up. But I had smile on my face of gratitude to God and to all Assyrians who made my Moscow visit a great success.

At the time of connection from Dubai I requested the authorities to check whether my two bags have been loaded. The answer was positive as usual. Yet my baggage reached Cochin only on Sunday. As the delay of the baggage was not due to my fault, the Emirates Airlines delivered them in the Metropolitan Palace in Trichur the next day.

This journey was indeed the most hectic one that I had undertaken. Looking back to those bitter experiences in Dubai airport for entry visa on 5th October 2006 and in Moscow airport to return to India on 27 October 2006 I am not sure that I will be keen to accept invitations to participate in international conferences as before.

Books by Mar Aprem

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2. Mar Abimalek Timotheus - A Biography ..... pp 282, 1975
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4. Strange But True: An Autobiography ..... pp 236, 1981
5. Not So Strange: An Autobiography, Part II ..... pp 236, 1991
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8. Nestorian Missions (Reprint 2002) ..... pp 134, 1976
9. The Chaldean Syrian Church in India ..... pp. 241, 1977
10. The Council of Ephesus of 431 ..... pp. 196, 1978
11. Sacraments of the Church of the East ..... pp. 142, 1978
12. Nestorian Theology ..... pp 183, 1978
13. Nestorian Lectionary & Julian Calendar ..... pp. 142, 1982
14. Western Missions Among Assyrians ..... pp. 152, 1982
15. A Nestorian Bibliography ..... pp. 128, 1982
16. Indian Christian Who is Who ..... pp. 210, 1983
17. The Chaldean Syrian Church of the East (ISPCK, Delhi) ..... pp. 64, 1984
18. Good News Festivals in India ..... pp. 224, 1984
19. Indian Christian Directory ..... pp. 264, 1984
20. Mar Aprem, Theologian & Poet ..... pp. 136, 1990
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22. Indian Church History Lectures ..... PP. 108, 2007

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24. From Baghdad to Chicago ..... pp. 168, 1985
25. Australian Assyrians ..... pp. 132, 1988
26. Belgium and Holland, via U.K. & U.S.A. ..... pp. 124, 1989
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28. The Assyrians in Iraq ..... pp. 112, 1989
29. Germany via Vienna ..... pp. 140, 1980
30. Washington to New York ..... pp. 133, 1992
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32. Los Angeles to Tokyo ..... pp. 136, 1993
33. Oxford to Austria ..... pp. 144, 1995
34. Salzburg to Boston ..... pp. 140, 1995
35. Israel, Scandinavia & U.S.A ..... pp. 112, 1996
36. Hassake to Hollywood ..... pp. 112, 1998
37. Italy, Liban & Iran ..... pp. 112, 1998
38. To U.K. Via U.S.A ..... pp. 104, 1999
39. USA, Canada, Europe & Thailand ..... pp. 104, 2000
40. Austria to Australia ..... pp. 104, 2001
41. India to Indiana ..... pp. 112, 2002
42. Two Trips in 2002 ..... pp. 104, 2003
43. Budapest to Rugby ..... pp. 128, 2003
44. UAE via U.K. and USA ..... pp. 120, 2005
45. Sharjah, Qatar & Brazil ..... pp. 104, 2006
46. Wiesbaden to Moscow.....pp. 104, 2007

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47. Bishop's Jokes (3rd edition,
    Light of Life, Bombay) pp.180. 1983
48. Laugh with the Bishop ,(8th edition,
    St.Paul's, Bombay) ..... pp. 95, 1988

49. Laugh to Health , C.L.S., Madras ..... pp. 82, 1992
50. Holy Humour ..... pp. 104, 1993
51. Joy to the World ..... pp. 104, 1994
52. Holy Smile ..... pp. 100, 1997
53. Not So Funny ..... pp. 112, 2004

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54. An Introduction to the History of the Eastern Churches (Revised Reprint, 1990) ..... pp. 196, 1976
55. *Christeeya Bhakti Ganangal* ..... pp. 124, 1985
56. Sabha Charitra Dictionary ..... pp. 424, 1985
57. *Christuvinte Kalpadukalilude* (Travelogue) ..... pp. 168, 1985

General

58. From Relief to Development : ..... pp. 282, 1979
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60. Behold the Cross of Calvary ..... pp. 208, 1987
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62. " " " " " II ..... pp. 138, 1988
63. The Nestorian Canon Law ..... pp. 138, 1990
64. Mesopotamia Light ..... pp. 120, 1993
65. Voices of the East ..... pp 128, 1998
66. Mother of the Motherless ..... pp 112, 2002
67. Poems and Prayers ..... pp. 100, 2002

To be published in 2008

1. Assyrian Fathers
2. Syriac Manuscripts in India
3. Teach Yourself Aramaic Vol II

About the Author

Most Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem (formerly George Mooken) was born in Trichur, Kerala, India in June 1940. Educated in India, England and America, he specialized in Church History. He was the President of the Church History Association of India. (1976-82).

After his intermediate course of two years in St. Thomas College, Trichur (Madras University) George Davis Mooken studied for four years in Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur and earned **B.D.** (Bachelor of Divinity) degree of Serampore Senate. He spent a year of Postgraduate studies in St. Boniface College, Warminster in England and visited Switzerland, Rome, Greece, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria etc in 1962. After two years of service in the church in Trichur he earned two master's degrees in Church History, one from the United Theological College, Bangalore (**M.Th.** of Serampore, 1966) and the other from the Union Theological Seminary, New York (**S.T.M.** degree, 1967).

He was a candidate for Doctor of Theology (**Th.D.**) degree at Princeton Theological Seminary, U.S.A., when he was consecrated bishop in Baghdad, Iraq in 1968. In 1976 he earned his **D.Th.** (Doctor of Theology) degree from Serampore University, near Calcutta. Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam conferred on him **Ph.D**, degree in the Department of Syriac language & Literature in 2002.

Ordained a deacon on June 25, 1961, he became a priest on the day he completed twenty-five years of age on 13 June 1965. He was consecrated bishop on 21st September 1968 and promoted as a Metropolitan eight days later in Baghdad.

His biography appears in the **International Who's who of Intellectuals, Vol. 6**, Cambridge (1985), the **International Directory of Distinguished Leadership**, first Edition, U.S.A. and others. He has 67 books in the field of Church History, biography, Travelogues, humour and such.

He was given 'Men of Achievement' Award of the International Biographical Center, Cambridge, England in 1984, and the 'Medal of Merit' of the Coptic Orthodox Cultural Center, Venice for his Cultural and ecumenical achievements. He was Co-Chairman of the Assyrian – Vatican Dialogue Committee based in Rome. In March 2004 he was given **International Poet of the Year 2004** award in Orlando, Florida.

Since 1968, he is Head of the Church of the East in India with his headquarters in Trichur. He is active in several religious and social organizations all over India.

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Kerala, India.

The List of Photographs

1. After Holy Qurbana at Assyrian Church in Yonkers, New York on 30 July 2006. Indians present. Mar Aprem is seated between Mr. Ignatius Nellangara and Tina. Left to Right: Rina, Mary, Jainie, Munna, Sanna, Aliamma, Jolly, Susan, Renil, Elsamma, Geevarghese Emmatty, Sudhin, Nithin, Vipin, Simón Thermadom, Jency, Jenson, Shanthmma, Valsan.

2. Mar Aprem Metropolitan with the family members of Geevarghese Emmatty in July 2006 in the house of Munna. Seated on the floor are his wife Reshma and son Sanna.

3. Mar Aprem in the house of Dr. Joy Kunjappu, Ph.D., D.Sc and his wife Mercy and son and daughter in New York on 29 July 2006. Simon Thermadom with wife Annie and daughter Tina, Jolly Thermadom with Susan and Renil are also seen.

4. After Qurbana at AI Cajon, San Diego on 4th August 2006. Vicar Fr. Khoshaba Sulaiman is on the right of Mar Aprem. Fr. Gabriel Brakhia is behind Mar Aprem.

5. Mar Aprem with Dane, Grandchild of his eldest brother Jos Mooken.

6. On 5th August in San Diego, California, Mar Aprem, brother Addison, niece Miki and Jay, Miriam and Tony with son Dane along with Grandma Mrs. Lalu Mooken.

7. Addison Mooken receiving Qurbana in St. Mary's Church, Tarzana, California on 6th August 2006.

8. Seena, Joly, Aneka, Mar Aprem, Grnadmother and Usha Johnson

9. Mar Aprem during Holy Qurbana in St. Mary Church in Tarzana near Los Angles in August 2006. Vicar Fr. George Bet Rasho (in the middle) and deacons are seen

10. After Holy Qurbana on 13 August 2006 in Toronto, Canada. Archdeacon Odisho and Bishop Mar Emmanuel Yosip seated on the right of Mar Aprem. The Vicar of the Parish Qasha Joseph is on the left.

11. Indian members standing behind Mar Aprem, Bishop Emmanuel Yosip, Archdeacon Odisho, Vicar etc. Seated left is Stanly Padavan with his son and wife Bindu behind him. Second from the left is Sunny Nellangara, the senior most man among the Indian group. Next to the Archdeacon is Binoy Jacob. The three oldest women are seated in the front row on the left of the bishop and the Vicar. Mrs. Mary Palissery Mrs. Anna George Thykadan and Mrs. Shanta Sunny Nellangara.

12. In London, Canada on 16 August 2006 Wilson Padavan, wife Sicily and Shanta Sunny with Mar Aprem in the kitchen of Padavan home.

13. With Assyrian men in Windsor, Canada on 17 August 2006.

14. Mar Aprem celebrates holy Qurbana in Detroit in 20th Augut 2006. Deacon Ruval Assists.

15. Mar Aprem with Joel and Ameli, the children of Mar Aprem's nephew Varghese George Nellangara of England along with Amelia's cousin Timothy Chandy on 24th August 2006 in Madras.

16. After Holy Qurbana on Friday 6 October 2006 at Sharjah, Mar Aprem and Fr. E.V. Antony with the members of our church in UAE (Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, etc.)

17. The choir members with Mar Aprem, Fr. Tabor and Deacon Yacoub and Mr. Nasser Elia after Qurbana in Vienna on 15 October 2006.

18. Cardinal Schonbrun of Vienna with Mar Aprem at Pro Oriente Meeting on 18 October 2006.

19. In front of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow (built in 1998) on 22 October 2006. Members from Kiev such as Dr. Dmitry Kanibolotsky, Alexander Patskin and Illya Graschenkov with Mar Aprem, Qasha Samano, Deacon Arsan, Nicholas Seleznev etc.

20. Photo taken in Moscow during supper with sub deacon David and his family when Mar Aprem Metropolitan visited Moscow in Oct 2006. Fr. Odisho Samano, Parish Priest is seated in the front.

21. Prof. Nikolai V. Shaburov, Head of the department of Religion in the State University in Moscow after the special lecture on Christianity in India delivered by Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan on 25 October 2006.

22. Church choir welcomes Mar Aprem in Moscow.

23. Dr. Jouna Davitashvili an Assyriar endocrinologist and much-decorated lady of international repute receiving Mar Aprem in her academy on 26 October 2006.

24. Fr. Samano Odisho with Mar Aprem and the Deputy Head of the Oriental section of the Russian State Library in Kremlin on 27th October 2006.

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Title page 2

Mart Mariam Church in Moscow, Russia. H.H.Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East consecrated it on Sunday September 7, 1998. It was built by Mr, Slava Illusion in his own land in memory of his Assyrian mother. Mr.Slava is still the leader of the Assyrian community in Russia. He has plans to develop the land around the Mart Mariam Assyrian Church

Mart Mariam Church near Detroit, Michigan. This new Church is built at 4320 at 14 Mile in Warren, Michigan. It is in the suburb of Detroit. CATHOLICOS Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV consecrated this Church on 6th May 2007. The bronze bell weighing 90 Kilograms was manufactured in South India and sent from Trichur to Detroit.

Title page 3

Mr. Slava Illusion, donor of the church in Moscow saying good-bye to Mar Aprem on 27 October in front of the altar. A lady member of our church is also seen.

Badalov with the Deputy Head of the Oriental section of the Russian State Library in Kremlin on 27th October 2006.

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ISBN 81 902 205 - 4